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THE DRAMATIC WORKS

OF

MOLIÈRE

RENDERED INTO ENGLISH

By HENRI VAN LAUN

WITH A PREFATORY MEMOIR, INTRODUCTORY NOTICES, APPENDICES AND NOTES

43859
B1603

VOLUME SECOND

EDINBURGH: WILLIAM PATERSON

MDCCCLXXV

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INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

The School for Husbands was the first play in the title of which the word "School" was employed, to imply that, over and above the intention of amusing, the author designed to convey a special lesson to his hearers. Perhaps Molière wished not only that the general public should be prepared to find instructions and warnings for married men, but also that they who were wont to regard the theatre as injurious, or at best trivial, should know that he professed to educate, as well as to entertain. We must count the adoption of similar titles by Sheridan and others amongst the tributes, by imitation, to Molière's genius.

This comedy was played for the first time at Paris, on the 24th of June 1661, and met with great success. On the 12th of July following it was acted at Vaux, the country seat of Fouquet, before the whole court, Monsieur, the brother of the King, and the Queen of England; and by them also was much approved. Some commentators say that Molière was partly inspired by a comedy of Lope de Vega, *La Discreta enamorada*, The cunning Sweetheart; also by a remodelling of the same play by Moreto, *No puede ser guardar una muger*, One cannot guard a woman: but this has lately been disproved. It appears, however, that he borrowed the primary idea of his comedy from the *Adelphi* of Terence; and from a tale, the third of the third day, in the Decameron of Boccaccio, where a young woman uses her father-confessor as a go-between for herself and her lover. In the *Adelphi* there are two old men of dissimilar character, who give a different education to the children they bring up. One of them is a dotard, who, after having for sixty years been sullen, grumpy, and avaricious, becomes suddenly lively, polite, and prodigal; this Molière had too much common sense to imitate.

The School for Husbands marks a distinct departure in the dramatist's literary progress. As a critic has well observed, it substitutes for situations produced by the mechanism of plot, characters which give rise to situations in accordance with the ordinary operations of human nature. Molière's method—the simple and only true one, and, consequently, the one which incontestably establishes the original talent of its employer—is this. At the beginning of a play, he introduces his

principal personages; sets them talking; suffers them to betray their characters, as men and women do in every-day life,—expecting from his hearers that same discernment which he has himself displayed in detecting their peculiarities; imports the germ of a plot in some slight misunderstanding or equivocal act; and leaves all the rest to be effected by the action and reaction of the characters which he began by bringing out in bold relief. His plots are thus the plots of nature; and it is impossible that they should not be both interesting and instructive. That his comedies, thus composed, are besides amusing, results from the shrewdness with which he has selected and combined his characters, and the art with which he arranges the situations produced.

The character-comedies of Molière exhibit, more than any others, the force of his natural genius, and the comparative weakness of his artistic talent. In the exhibition and evolution of character, he is supreme. In the unravelling of his plots and the *dénouement* of his situations, he is driven too willingly to the *deus ex machina*.

The School for Husbands was directed against one of the special and prominent defects of society in the age and country in which Molière lived. Domestic tyranny was not only rife, but it was manifested in one of its coarsest forms. Sganarelle, though twenty years younger than Ariste, and not quite forty years old, could not govern by moral force; he relied solely on bolts and bars. Physical restraint was the safeguard in which husbands and parents had the greatest confidence, not perceiving that the brain and the heart are always able to prevail against it. This truth Molière took upon himself to preach, and herein he surpasses all his rivals; in nothing more than in the artistic device by which he introduces the contrast of the wise and trustful Ariste, the *raisonneur* as he is called in French, rewarded in the end by the triumph of his more humane mode of treatment. Molière probably expresses his own feelings by the mouth of Ariste; for *The School for Husbands* was performed on the 24th of June 1661, and about eight months later, on the 20th of February 1662, he married Armande Béjart, being then about double her age. As to Sganarelle in this play, he ceases to be a mere buffoon, as in some of Molière's farces, and becomes the personification of an idea or of a folly which has to be ridiculed.

Molière dedicated *The School for Husbands* to the Duke of Orleans, the King's only brother, in the following words:—

MY LORD,

I here shew France things that are but little consistent. Nothing can be so great and superb as the name I place in front of this book; and nothing more mean than what it contains. Every one will think this a strange mixture; and some, to express its inequality, may say that it is like setting a crown of pearls and diamonds on an earthen statue, and making magnificent porticos and lofty triumphal arches to a mean cottage. But, my Lord, my excuse is, that in this case I had no choice to make, and that the honour I have of belonging to your

Royal Highness,[1] absolutely obliged me to dedicate to you the first work that I myself published.[2] It is not a present I make you, it is a duty I discharge; and homages are never looked upon by the things they bring. I presumed, therefore, to dedicate a trifle to your Royal Highness, because I could not help it; but if I omit enlarging upon the glorious truths I might tell of you, it is through a just fear that those great ideas would make my offering the more inconsiderable. I have imposed silence on myself, meaning to wait for an opportunity better suited for introducing such fine things; all I intended in this epistle, was to justify my action to France, and to have the glory of telling you yourself, my Lord, with all possible submission, that I am your Royal Highness' very humble, very obedient, and very faithful servant,

MOLIÈRE.

In the fourth volume of the "Select Comedies of M. de Molière, London, 1732," the translation of *The School for Husbands* is dedicated to the Right Honourable the Lady Harriot Campbell, in the following words:—

MADAM,

A *Comedy*, which came abroad in its Native Language, under the Patronage of the *Duke* of ORLEANS, Brother to the *King* of FRANCE, attempts now to speak English, and begs the Honour of Your LADYSHIP'S Favour and Acceptance. That distinguishing good Sense, that nice Discernment, that refined Taste of Reading and Politeness, for which your LADYSHIP is so deservedly admir'd, must, I'm persuaded, make You esteem *Molière*; whose way of expression is easy and elegant, his Sentiments just and delicate, and his Morals untainted: who constantly combats Vice and Folly with strong Reason and well turn'd Ridicule; in short, whose *Plays* are all instructive, and tend to some useful Purpose:—An Excellence sufficient to recommend them to Your LADYSHIP.

As for this *Translation*, which endeavours to preserve the Spirit as well as Meaning of the Original, I shall only say, that if it can be so happy as to please Your LADYSHIP, all the Pains it cost me will be over-paid.

I beg Pardon for this Presumption, and am, with the greatest Respect that's possible, *Madam, Your Ladyship's Most Obedient and most Humble Servant*,

THE TRANSLATOR.

Sir Charles Sedley, well known through a history of a "frolick" which Pepys relates in his "Diary,"[3] wrote *The Mulberry Garden*, of which Langbaine, in his "An Account of the Dramatick Poets," states, "I dare not say that the character of Sir John Everyoung and Sir Samuel Forecast are copies of Sganarelle and Ariste in Molière's *l'Ecole*

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[1] Moliere was the chief of the troupe of actors belonging to the Duke of Orleans, who had only lately married, and was not yet twenty-one years old.

[2] *Sganarelle* (see Vol. I., p. 267) had been borrowed by Neufvillenaine; the *Pretentious Young Ladies* was only printed by Moliere, because the copy of the play was stolen from him; *Don Garcia of Navarre* was not published till after his death, in 1682.

[3] See Pepys' Diary, October 23, 1668.

des Maris; but I may say, that there is some resemblance, though whoever understands both languages will readily and with justice give our English wit the preference; and Sir Charles is not to learn to copy Nature from the French." This comedy, which was played by his Majesty's servants at the Theatre Royal, 1688, is dedicated to the Duchess of Richmond and Lennox, a lady who "has 'scap'd (prefaces) very well hitherto," but, says Sir Charles, "Madam, your time is come, and you must bear it patiently. All the favour I can show you is that of a good executioner, which is, not to prolong your pain." This play has two girls like Isabella, called Althea and Diana, two like Leonor, Victoria and Olivia, and four lovers, as well as a rather intricate plot. Some of the borrowed scenes will be found in the Appendix. The Epilogue is amusing, and we give the beginning of it—

Poets of all men have the hardest game,
Their best Endeavours can no Favours claim.
The Lawyer if o'erthrown, though by the Laws,
He quits himself, and lays it on your Cause.
The Soldier is esteem'd a Man of War,
And Honour gains, if he but bravely dare.
The grave Physician, if his Patient dye,
He shakes his Head and blames Mortality.
Only poor Poets their own Faults must bear;
Therefore grave Judges be not too severe.

Flecknoe has also imitated several of the scenes of *The School for Husbands* in *The Damoiselles à la Mode*, which is a medley of several of Molière's plays (see Introductory Notice to *The Pretentious Young Ladies*, Vol. I. p. 209).

James Miller has likewise followed, in *The Man of Taste* (Act i., Scene 2), (see Introductory Notice to *The Pretentious Young Ladies*), one scene of the first act of Molière's *The School for Husbands.*

Murphy, in *The School for Guardians*, has borrowed from three plays of Molière. The main plot is taken from *The School for Wives;* some incidents of the second act are taken from *The Blunderer* (see Introductory Notice to *The Blunderer*, Vol. I. p. 1), but the scenes in which Oldcastle and Lovibond state their intention of marrying their wards, and the way in which one of the wards, Harriet, makes her love known to Belford, is taken from *The School for Husbands*, though Leonor does not betray in the French comedy, as she does in the English, the confidence placed in her. The French Isabella acts like Harriet, but then she has a foolish and jealous guardian.

Wycherley, in *The Country Wife*, probably acted in 1672 or 1673, and which is partly an imitation of Molière's *School for Wives*, has borrowed from *The School for Husbands*, the letter which Isabella writes to Valère (Act ii., Scene 8), and also the scene in which Isabella escapes disguised in her sister's clothes; but, of course, to give an additional

zest to the English play, the author makes Pinchwife himself bring his wife to her lover, Horner. The scene hardly bears transcribing. He has also partly imitated in *The Gentleman Dancing-Master*, first performed in 1673 some scenes of *The School for Husbands*.

Otway, in *The Soldier's Fortune* (see Introductory Notice to *Sganarelle, or The Self-Deceived Husband*, Vol. I., p. 267), has borrowed from Molière's *School for Husbands* that part of his play in which Lady Dunse makes her husband the agent for conveying a ring and a letter to her lover.

All the scenes, taken by the different authors from Molière, will be found in the Appendix.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SGANARELLE,[4] } *brothers.*
ARISTE, }
VALÈRE, *lover to Isabella.*
ERGASTE, *servant to Valère.*
A MAGISTRATE.[5]
A NOTARY.

ISABELLA, } *sisters.*
LÉONOR, }
LISETTE, *maid to Isabella.*

Scene—A PUBLIC PLACE IN PARIS.

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[4] This part was played by Molière himself. In the inventory taken after Molière's death, and given by M. Soulié, we find: "A dress for *The School for Husbands*, consisting of breeches, doublet, cloak, collar, purse, and girdle, all of a kind of brown coloured (*couleur de musc*) satin."

[5] The original has *un Commissaire*, who in Molière's time, appears to have been a kind of inferior magistrate under the authority of the *Lieutenant-général de la Police*. The *Commissaires de Police* were not established till 1699; and *The School for Husbands* was played for the first time in 1661.

THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS.

(*L'ÉCOLE DES MARIS.*)

ACT I. SCENE I.

SGANARELLE, ARISTE.[6]

Sgan. Pray, brother, let us talk less, and let each of us live as he likes. Though you have the advantage of me in years, and are old enough to be wise, yet I tell you that I mean to receive none of your reproofs; that my fancy is the only counsellor I shall follow, and that I am quite satisfied with my way of living.

Ar. But every one condemns it.

Sgan. Yes, fools like yourself, brother.

Ar. Thank you very much. It is a pleasant compliment.

Sgan. I should like to know, since one ought to hear everything, what these fine critics blame in me.

Ar. That surly and austere temper which shuns all the charms of society gives a whimsical appearance to all your actions, and makes everything peculiar in you, even your dress.

Sgan. I ought then to make myself a slave to fashion, and not to put on clothes for my own sake? Would you not, my dear elder brother—for, Heaven be thanked, so you are, to tell you plainly, by a matter of twenty years; and that is not worth the trouble of mentioning—would you

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[6] See Appendix, Note A.

not, I say, by your precious nonsense, persuade me to adopt the fashions of those young sparks[7] of yours? Oblige me to wear those little hats which provide ventilation for their weak brains, and that flaxen hair, the vast curls whereof conceal the form of the human face;[8] those little doublets but just below the arms, and those big collars falling down to the navel; those sleeves which one sees at table trying all the sauces, and those petticoats called breeches; those tiny shoes, covered with ribbons, which make you look like feather-legged pigeons; and those large rolls[9] wherein the legs are put every morning, as it were into the stocks, and in which we see these gallants straddle about with their legs as wide apart, as if they were the beams of a mill?[10] I should

[7] The original has *vos jeunes muguets*, literally "your young lilies of the valley," because in former times, according to some annotators, the courtiers wore natural or artificial lilies of the valley in their button-holes, and perfumed themselves with the essence of that flower. I think that *muguet* is connected with the old French word *musguet*, smelling of musk. In Molière's time *muguet* had become rather antiquated; hence it was rightly placed in the mouth of Sganarelle, who likes to use such words and phrases. Rabelais employs it in the eighth chapter of *Gargantua*, *un tas de muguets*, and it has been translated by Sir Thomas Urquhart as "some fond wooers and wench-courters." The fashion of calling dandies after the name of perfumes is not rare in France. Thus Regnier speaks of them as *marjolets*, from *marjolaine*, sweet marjoram; and Agrippa d'Aubigné calls them *muscadins* (a word also connected with the old French *musguet*), which name was renewed at the beginning of the first French revolution, and bestowed on elegants, because they always smelled of musk.

[8] The fashion was in Molière's time to wear the hair, or wigs, very long, and if possible of a fair colour, which gave to the young fashionables, hence called *blondins*, an effeminate air. Sganarelle addresses Valère (Act ii. Scene 9), likewise as *Monsieur aux blonds cheveux*. In *The School for Wives* (Act ii. Scene 6), Arnolphe also tells Agnès not to listen to the nonsense of these *beaux blondins*. According to Juvenal (Satire VI.) Messalina put a fair wig on to disguise herself. Louis XIV. did not begin to wear a wig until 1673.

[9] See Vol. I. pages 232 and 240, notes 23 and 33.

[10] The original has *marcher écarquillés ainsi que des volants*. Early commentators have generally stated that *volants* means here "the beams of a mill," but MM. Moland and E. Despois, the last annotators of

doubtless please you, bedizened in this way; I see that you wear the stupid gewgaws which it is the fashion to wear.

Ar. We should always agree with the majority, and never cause ourselves to be stared at. Extremes shock, and a wise man should do with his clothes as with his speech; avoid too much affectation, and without being in too great a hurry, follow whatever change custom introduces. I do not think that we should act like those people who always exaggerate the fashion, and who are annoyed that another should go further than themselves in the extremes which they affect; but I maintain that it is wrong, for whatever reasons, obstinately to eschew what every one observes; that it would be better to be counted among the fools than to be the only wise person, in opposition to every one else.

Sgan. That smacks of the old man who, in order to impose upon the world, covers his grey hairs with a black wig.[11]

Ar. It is strange that you should be so careful always to fling my age in my face, and that I should continually find you blaming my dress as well as my cheerfulness. One would imagine that old age ought to think of nothing but death, since it is condemned to give up all enjoyment; and that it is not attended by enough ugliness of its own, but must needs be slovenly and crabbed.

Sgan. However that may be, I am resolved to stick to my way of dress. In spite of the fashion, I like my cap so

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Molière, maintain that it stands for "shuttlecock," because the large rolls (*canons*), tied at the knee and wide at the bottom, bore a great resemblance to shuttlecocks turned upside down. I cannot see how this can suit the words *marcher écarquillés*, for the motion of the *canons* of gallants, walking or straddling about, is very unlike that produced by shuttlecocks beaten by battledores; I still think "beams of a mill" right, because, though the *canons* did not look like beams of a mill, the legs did, when in motion.

[11] See Appendix, Note B.

that my head may be comfortably sheltered beneath it; a good long doublet buttoned close, as it should be,[12] which may keep the stomach warm, and promote a healthy digestion; a pair of breeches made exactly to fit my thighs; shoes, like those of our wise ancestors, in which my feet may not be tortured: and he who does not like the look of me may shut his eyes.[13]

SCENE II.[14]

LÉONOR, ISABELLA, LISETTE; ARISTE *and* SGANARELLE, *conversing in an under-tone, unperceived.*

Leo. [*To Isabella*] I take it all on myself, in case you are scolded.

Lis. [*To Isabella*] Always in one room, seeing no one?

Isa. Such is his humour.

Leo. I pity you, sister.

Lis. [*To Léonor*] It is well for you, madam, that his brother is of quite another disposition; fate was very kind in making you fall into the hands of a rational person.

Isa. It is a wonder that he did not lock me up to-day, or take me with him.

Lis. I declare I would send him to the devil, with his Spanish ruff,[15] and . . .

Sgan. [*Against whom Lisette stumbles*] Where are you going, if I may ask?

Leo. We really do not know; I was urging my sister

[12] The young dandies in the beginning of the reign of Louis XIV. wore slashed doublets, very tight and short.

[13] See Appendix, Note C.

[14] See Appendix, Note D.

[15] The Spanish ruff (*fraise*) was in fashion at the end of Henri IV.'s reign; in the reign of Louis XIII., and in the beginning of Louis XIV.'s, flat-lying collars, adorned with lace, were worn, so that those who still stuck to the Spanish ruff in 1661, were considered very old-fashioned people.

to take a walk, and enjoy this pleasant and fine weather; but . . .

Sgan. [*To Léonor*] As for you, you may go wherever you please. [*To Lisette*] You can run off; there are two of you together. [*To Isabella*] But as for you, I forbid you—excuse me—to go out.

Ar. Oh, brother! let them go and amuse themselves.

Sgan. I am your servant, brother.

Ar. Youth will . . .

Sgan. Youth is foolish, and old age too, sometimes.

Ar. Do you think there is any harm in her being with Léonor?

Sgan. Not so; but with me I think she is still better.

Ar. But . . .

Sgan. But her conduct must be guided by me; in short, I know the interest I ought to take in it.

Ar. Have I less in her sister's?[16]

Sgan. By Heaven! each one argues and does as he likes. They are without relatives, and their father, our friend, entrusted them to us in his last hour, charging us both either to marry them, or, if we declined, to dispose of them hereafter. He gave us, in writing, the full authority of a father and a husband over them, from their infancy. You undertook to bring up that one; I charged myself with the care of this one. You govern yours at your pleasure. Leave me, I pray, to manage the other as I think best.

Ar. It seems to me . . .

Sgan. It seems to me, and I say it openly, that is the right way to speak on such a subject. You let your ward go about gaily and stylishly; I am content. You let her have footmen and a maid; I agree. You let her gad about, love idleness, be freely courted by dandies; I am quite satis-

[16] See Appendix, Note E.

fied. But I intend that mine shall live according to my fancy, and not according to her own; that she shall be dressed in honest serge, and wear only black on holidays; that, shut up in the house, prudent in bearing, she shall apply herself entirely to domestic concerns, mend my linen in her leisure hours, or else knit stockings for amusement; that she shall close her ears to the talk of the young sparks, and never go out without some one to watch her. In short, flesh is weak; I know what stories are going about. I have no mind to wear horns, if I can help it; and as her lot requires her to marry me, I mean to be as certain of her as I am of myself.

Isa. I believe you have no grounds for . . . .

Sgan. Hold your tongue, I shall teach you to go out without us!

Leo. What, sir. . . . .

Sgan. Good Heavens, madam! without wasting any more words, I am not speaking to you, for you are too clever.

Leo. Do you regret to see Isabella with us?

Sgan. Yes, since I must speak plainly; you spoil her for me. Your visits here only displease me, and you will oblige me by honouring us no more.

Leo. Do you wish that I shall likewise speak my thoughts plainly to you? I know not how she regards all this; but I know what effect mistrust would have on me. Though we are of the same father and mother, she is not much of my sister if your daily conduct produces any love in her.

Lic. Indeed, all these precautions are disgraceful. Are we in Turkey, that women must be shut up? There, they say, they are kept like slaves; that is why the Turks are accursed by God. Our honour, sir, is very weak indeed, if it must be perpetually watched. Do you think, after all, that these precautions are any bar to our

designs? that, when we take anything into our heads, the cleverest man would not be but a donkey to us? All that vigilance of yours is but a fool's notion; the best way of all, I assure you, is to trust us. He who torments us puts himself in extreme peril, for our honour must ever be its own protector. To take so much trouble in preventing us is almost to give us a desire to sin. If I were suspected by my husband, I should have a very good mind to justify his fear.

Sgan. [*to Ariste*] This, my fine teacher, is your training. And you endure it without being troubled?

Ar. Brother, her words should only make you smile. There is some reason in what she says. Their sex loves to enjoy a little freedom; they are but ill-checked by so much austerity. Suspicious precautions, bolts and bars, make neither wives nor maids virtuous. It is honour which must hold them to their duty, not the severity which we display towards them. To tell you candidly, a woman who is discreet by compulsion only is not often to be met with. We pretend in vain to govern all her actions; I find that it is the heart we must win. For my part, whatever care might be taken, I would scarcely trust my honour in the hands of one who, in the desires which might assail her, required nothing but an opportunity of falling.

Sgan. That is all nonsense.

Ar. Have it so; but still I maintain that we should instruct youth pleasantly, chide their faults with great tenderness, and not make them afraid of the name of virtue. Léonor's education has been based on these maxims. I have not made crimes of the smallest acts of liberty, I have always assented to her youthful wishes, and, thank Heaven, I never repented of it. I have allowed her to see good company, to go to amusements, balls, plays. These are things which, for my part, I think are calculated to form the minds of the young; the world is a school which,

in my opinion, teaches them better how to live than any book. Does she like to spend money on clothes, linen, ribands—what then? I endeavour to gratify her wishes; these are pleasures which, when we are well-off, we may permit to the girls of our family. Her father's command requires her to marry me; but it is not my intention to tyrannise over her. I am quite aware that our years hardly suit, and I leave her complete liberty of choice.[17] If a safe income of four thousand crowns a-year, great affection and consideration for her, may, in her opinion, counterbalance in marriage the inequality of our age, she may take me for her husband; if not, she may choose elsewhere. If she can be happier without me, I do not object; I prefer to see her with another husband rather than that her hand should be given to me against her will.

Sgan. Oh, how sweet he is! All sugar and honey!

Ar. At all events, that is my disposition; and I thank Heaven for it. I would never lay down those strict rules which make children wish their parents dead.

Sgan. But the liberty acquired in youth is not so easily withdrawn later on; all those feelings will please you but little when you have to change her mode of life.

Ar. And why change it?

Sgan. Why?

Ar. Yes.

Sgan. I do not know.

Ar. Is there anything in it that offends honour?

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[17] *The School for Husbands* was played, for the first time, on the 24th of June 1661, and Molière married Armande Béjart (see Vol. I., Prefatory Memoir, page xxvii.), on the 20th of February 1662, when he was forty, and she about twenty years old. It is therefore not unreasonable to suppose that the words he places in the mouth of Ariste are an expression of his own feelings.

Sgan. Why, if you marry her, she may demand the same freedom which she enjoyed as a girl?

Ar. Why not?

Sgan. And you so far agree with her as to let her have patches and ribbons?

Ar. Doubtless.

Sgan. To let her gad about madly at every ball and public assembly?

Ar. Yes, certainly.

Sgan. And the beaux will visit at your house?

Ar. What then?

Sgan. Who will junket and give entertainments?

Ar. With all my heart.

Sgan. And your wife is to listen to their fine speeches?

Ar. Exactly.

Sgan. And you will look on at these gallant visits with a show of indifference?

Ar. Of course.

Sgan. Go on, you old idiot. [*To Isabella*] Get indoors, and hear no more of this shameful doctrine.[18]

SCENE III.

ARISTE, SGANARELLE, LÉONOR, LISETTE.

Ar. I mean to trust to the faithfulness of my wife, and intend always to live as I have lived.

Sgan. How pleased I shall be to see him victimised!

Ar. I cannot say what fate has in store for me; but as for you, I know that if you fail to be so, it is no fault of yours, for you are doing everything to bring it about.

Sgan. Laugh on, giggler! Oh, what a joke it is to see a railer of nearly sixty!

Leo. I promise to preserve him against the fate you

[18] See Appendix, Note F.

speak of, if he is to receive my vows at the altar. He may rest secure; but I can tell you that I would pass my word for nothing if I were your wife.

Lis. We have a conscience for those who rely on us; but it is delightful, really, to cheat such folks as you.

Sgan. Hush, you cursed ill-bred tongue!

Ar. Brother, you drew these silly words on yourself. Good bye. Alter your temper, and be warned that to shut up a wife is a bad plan. Your servant.

Sgan. I am not yours.

SCENE IV.

SGANARELLE, *alone.*

Oh, they are all well suited to one another! What an admirable family. A foolish old man with a worn-out body who plays the fop; a girl-mistress and a thorough coquette; impudent servants;—no, wisdom itself could not succeed, but would exhaust sense and reason, trying to amend a household like this. By such associations, Isabella might lose those principles of honour which she learned amongst us; to prevent it, I shall presently send her back again to my cabbages and turkeys.

SCENE V.

VALÈRE, SGANARELLE, ERGASTE. [19]

Val. [*Behind*] Ergaste, that is he, the Argus whom I hate, the stern guardian of her whom I adore.

Sgan. [*Thinking himself alone*] In short, is there not something wonderful in the corruption of manners now-a-days?

Val. I should like to address him, if I can get a chance, and try to strike up an acquaintance with him.

[19] See Appendix, Note G.

Sgan. [*Thinking himself alone*] Instead of seeing that severity prevail which so admirably formed virtue in other days, uncontrolled and imperious youth here-about assumes . . . [*Valère bows to Sganarelle from a distance.*

Val. He does not see that we bow to him.

Erg. Perhaps his blind eye is on this side. Let us cross to the right.

Sgan. I must go away from this place. Life in town only produces in me . . .

Val. [*Gradually approaching*] I must try to get an introduction.

Sgan. [*Hearing a noise*] Ha! I thought some one spoke . . . [*Thinking himself alone*] In the country, thank Heaven, the fashionable follies do not offend my eyes.

Erg. [*To Valère*] Speak to him.

Sgan. What is it? . . . my ears tingle. . . . There, all the recreations of our girls are but . . . [*He perceives Valère bowing to him*] Do you bow to me?

Erg. [*To Valère*] Go up to him.

Sgan. [*Not attending to Valère*] Thither no coxcomb comes. [*Valère again bows to him*] What the deuce! . . . [*He turns and sees Ergaste bowing on the other side*] Another? What a great many bows!

Val. Sir, my accosting you disturbs you, I fear?

Sgan. That may be.

Val. But yet the honour of your acquaintance is so great a happiness, so exquisite a pleasure, that I had a great desire to pay my respects to you.

Sgan. Well.

Val. And to come and assure you, without any deceit, that I am wholly at your service.

Sgan. I believe it.

Val. I have the advantage of being one of your neighbours, for which I thank my lucky fate.

Sgan. That is all right.

Val. But, sir, do you know the news going the round at Court, and thought to be reliable?

Sgan. What does it matter to me?

Val. True; but we may sometimes be anxious to hear it. Shall you go and see the magnificent preparations for the birth of our Dauphin, sir?[20]

Sgan. If I feel inclined.

Val. Confess that Paris affords us a hundred delightful pleasures which are not to be found elsewhere. The provinces are a desert in comparison. How do you pass your time?

Sgan. On my own business.

Val. The mind demands relaxation, and occasionally gives way, by too close attention to serious occupations. What do you do in the evening before going to bed?

Sgan. What I please.

Val. Doubtless no one could speak better. The answer is just, and it seems to be common sense to resolve never to do what does not please us. If I did not think you were too much occupied, I would drop in on you sometimes after supper.

Sgan. Your servant.

SCENE VI.

VALÈRE, ERGASTE.[21]

Val. What do you think of that eccentric fool?

Erg. His answers are abrupt and his reception is churlish.

Val. Ah! I am in a rage.

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[20] The Dauphin, the son of Louis XIV., was born at Fontainebleau, on the 1st of November 1661; *The School for Husbands* was first acted on the 24th of June of the same year; hence Molière ventures to prophecy about the Dauphin's birth.

[21] See Appendix Note H.

Erg. What for?

Val. Why am I in a rage? To see her I love in the power of a savage, a watchful dragon, whose severity will not permit her to enjoy a single moment of liberty.

Erg. That is just what is in your favour. Your love ought to expect a great deal from these circumstances. Know, for your encouragement, that a woman watched is half-won, and that the gloomy ill-temper of husbands and fathers has always promoted the affairs of the gallant. I intrigue very little; for that is not one of my accomplishments. I do not pretend to be a gallant; but I have served a score of such sportsmen, who often used to tell me that it was their greatest delight to meet with churlish husbands, who never come home without scolding,—downright brutes, who, without rhyme or reason, criticise the conduct of their wives in everything, and, proudly assuming the authority of a husband, quarrel with them before the eyes of their admirers. 'One knows,' they would say, 'how to take advantage of this. The lady's indignation at this kind of outrage, on the one hand, and the considerate compassion of the lover, on the other, afford an opportunity for pushing matters far enough.' In a word, the surliness of Isabella's guardian is a circumstance sufficiently favourable for you.

Val. But I could never find one moment to speak to her in the four months that I have ardently loved her.

Erg. Love quickens people's wits, though it has little effect on yours. If I had been . . .

Val. Why, what could you have done? For one never sees her without that brute; in the house there are neither maids nor men-servants whom I might influence to assist me by the alluring temptation of some reward.

Erg. Then she does not yet know that you love her?

Val. It is a point on which I am not informed. Wherever the churl took this fair one, she always

saw me like a shadow behind her; my looks daily tried to explain to her the violence of my love. My eyes have spoken much; but who can tell whether, after all, their language could be understood?

Erg. It is true that this language may sometimes prove obscure, if it have not writing or speech for its interpreter.

Val. What am I to do to rid myself of this vast difficulty, and to learn whether the fair one has perceived that I love her? Tell me some means or other.

Erg. That is what we have to discover. Let us go in for a while—the better to think over it.

ACT II. SCENE I.

ISABELLA, SGANARELLE.[22]

Sgan. That will do; I know the house, and the person, simply from the description you have given me.

Isa. [*Aside*] Heaven, be propitious, and favour to-day the artful contrivance of an innocent love!

Sgan. Do you say they have told you that his name is Valère?

Isa. Yes.

Sgan. That will do; do not make yourself uneasy about it. Go inside, and leave me to act. I am going at once to talk to this young madcap.

Isa. [*As she goes in*] For a girl, I am planning a pretty bold scheme. But the unreasonable severity with which I am treated will be my excuse to every right mind.[23]

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[22] See Appendix, Note I.

[23] See Appendix, Note J.

SCENE II.

SGANARELLE, *alone.*

[*Knocks at the door of Valère's house*] Let us lose no time; here it is. Who's there? Why, I am dreaming! Hulloa, I say! hulloa somebody! hulloa! I do not wonder, after this information, that he came up to me just now so meekly. But I must make haste, and teach this foolish aspirant. . . .

SCENE III.

VALÈRE, SGANARELLE, ERGASTE.[24]

Sgan. [*To Ergaste, who has come out hastily*] A plague on the lubberly ox! Do you mean to knock me down —coming and sticking yourself in front of me like a post?

Val. Sir, I regret . . .

Sgan. Ah! you are the man I want.

Val. I, sir?

Sgan. You. Your name is Valère, is it not?

Val. Yes.

Sgan. I am come to speak to you, if you will allow me.

Val. Can I have the happiness of rendering you any service?

Sgan. No; but I propose to do you a good turn. That is what brings me to your house.

Val. To my house, sir?

Sgan. To your house. Need you be so much astonished?

Val. I have good reason for it; I am delighted with the honour . . .

Sgan. Do not mention the honour, I beseech you.

Val. Will you not come in?

Sgan. There is no need.

Val. I pray you, enter.

[24] See Appendix, Note K.

Sgan. No, I will go no further.

Val. As long as you stay there I cannot listen to you.

Sgan. I will not budge.

Val. Well, I must yield. Quick, since this gentleman is resolved upon it, bring a chair.

Sgan. I am going to talk standing.

Val. As if I could permit such a thing!

Sgan. What an intolerable delay!

Val. Such incivility would be quite unpardonable.

Sgan. Nothing can be so rude as not to listen to people who wish to speak to us.

Val. I obey you, then.

Sgan. You cannot do better. [*They make many compliments about putting on their hats*] So much ceremony is hardly necessary. Will you listen to me?

Val. Undoubtedly, and most willingly.

Sgan. Tell me: do you know that I am guardian to a tolerably young and passably handsome girl who lives in this neighbourhood, and whose name is Isabella?

Val. Yes.

Sgan. As you know it, I need not tell it you. But do you know, likewise, that as I find her charming, I care for her otherwise than as a guardian, and that she is destined for the honour of being my wife?

Val. No!

Sgan. I tell it you, then; and also that it is as well that your passion, if you please, should leave her in peace.

Val. Who?—I, sir?

Sgan. Yes, you. Let us have no dissembling.

Val. Who has told you that my heart is smitten by her?

Sgan. Those who are worthy of belief.

Val. Be more explicit.

Sgan. She herself.

Val. She!

Sgan. She. Is not that enough? Like a virtuous young girl, who has loved me from childhood, she told me all just now; moreover, she charged me to tell you, that, since she has everywhere been followed by you, her heart, which your pursuit greatly offends, has only too well understood the language of your eyes; that your secret desires are well known to her; and that to try more fully to explain a passion which is contrary to the affection she entertains for me, is to give yourself needless trouble.

Val. She, you say, of her own accord, makes you . . .

Sgan. Yes, makes me come to you and give you this frank and plain message; also that, having observed the violent love wherewith your soul is smitten, she would earlier have let you know what she thinks about you if, perplexed as she was, she could have found anyone to send this message by; but that at length she was painfully compelled to make use of me, in order to assure you, as I have told you, that her affection is denied to all save me; that you have been ogling her long enough; and that, if you have ever so little brains, you will carry your passion somewhere else. Farewell, till our next meeting. That is what I had to tell you.

Val. [*Aside*] Ergaste, what say you to such an adventure?

Sgan. [*Aside, retiring*] See how he is taken aback!

Erg. [*In a low tone to Valère*] For my part, I think that there is nothing in it to displease you; that a rather subtle mystery is concealed under it; in short, that this message is not sent by one who desires to see the love end which she inspires in you.

Sgan. [*Aside.*] He takes it as he ought.

Val. [*In a low tone to Ergaste.*] You think it a mystery . . .

Evg. Yes. . . . But he is looking at us; let us get out of his sight.[25]

SCENE IV.

SGANARELLE, *alone.*[26]

How his face showed his confusion! Doubtless he did not expect this message. Let me call Isabella; she is showing the fruits which education produces on the mind. Virtue is all she cares for; and her heart is so deeply steeped in it, that she is offended if a man merely looks at her.

SCENE V.

ISABELLA, SGANARELLE.[27]

Isa. [*Aside, as she enters*] I fear that my lover, full of his passion, has not understood my message rightly! Since I am so strictly guarded, I must risk one which shall make my meaning clearer.

Sgan. Here I am, returned again.

Isa. Well?

Sgan. Your words wrought their full purpose; I have done his business. He wanted to deny that his heart was touched; but when I told him I came from you, he stood immediately dumbfoundered and confused; I do not believe he will come here any more.

Isa. Ah, what do you tell me? I much fear the contrary, and that he will still give us more trouble.

Sgan. And why do you fear this?

Isa. You had hardly left the house when, going to the window to take a breath of air, I saw a young man at yonder turning, who first came, most unexpectedly, to wish me good morning, on the part of this

[25] See Appendix, Note L. [26] See Appendix, Note M.
[27] See Appendix, Note N.

impertinent man, and then threw right into my chamber a box, enclosing a letter, sealed like a love-letter.[28] I meant at once to throw it after him; but he had already reached the end of the street. I feel very much annoyed at it.

Sgan. Just see his trickery and rascality!

Isa. It is my duty quickly to have this box and letter sent back to this detestable lover; for that purpose I need some one; for I dare not venture to ask yourself . . .

Sgan. On the contrary, darling, it shows me all the more your love and faithfulness; my heart joyfully accepts this task. You oblige me in this more than I can tell you.[29]

Isa. Take it then.

Sgan. Well, let us see what he has dared to say to you.

Isa. Heavens! Take care not to open it!

Sgan. Why so?

Isa. Will you make him believe that it is I? A respectable girl ought always to refuse to read the letters a man sends her. The curiosity which she thus betrays shows a secret pleasure in listening to gallantries. I think it right that this letter should be peremptorily returned to Valère unopened, that he may the better learn this day the great contempt which my heart feels for him; so that his passion may from this time lose all hope, and never more attempt such a transgression.

Sgan. Of a truth she is right in this! Well, your virtue charms me, as well as your discretion. I see that my lessons have borne fruit in your mind; you show yourself worthy of being my wife.

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[28] The original has *un poulet*, literally "a chicken," because love-letters were folded so as to represent a fowl, with two wings; this shape is now called *cocotte*, from *coq*, and, though no longer used to designate a billet-doux, is often employed in familiar phraseology, in speaking of a girl who does not lead a moral life.

[29] See Appendix, Note O.

Isa. Still I do not like to stand in the way of your wishes. The letter is in your hands, and you can open it.

Sgan. No, far from it. Your reasons are too good; I go to acquit myself of the task you impose upon me; I have likewise to say a few words quite near, and will then return hither to set you at rest.[30]

SCENE VI.

SGANARELLE, *alone.*

How delighted I am to find her such a discreet girl! I have in my house a treasure of honour. To consider a loving look treason, to receive a love-letter as a supreme insult, and to have it carried back to the gallant by myself! I should like to know, seeing all this, if my brother's ward would have acted thus, on a similar occasion. Upon my word, girls are what you make them . . . Hulloa!

[*Knocks at Valère's door.*]

SCENE VII.

SGANARELLE, ERGASTE.[31]

Erg. Who is there?

Sgan. Take this; and tell your master not to presume so far as to write letters again, and send them in gold boxes; say also that Isabella is mightily offended at it. See, it has not even been opened. He will perceive what regard she has for his passion, and what success he can expect in it.

SCENE VIII.

VALÈRE, ERGASTE.

Val. What has that surly brute just given you?

Erg. This letter, sir, as well as this box, which he pretends that Isabella has received from you, and about

[30] See Appendix, Note P. [31] See Appendix, Note Q.

which, he says, she is in a great rage. She returns it to you unopened. Read it quickly, and let us see if I am mistaken.[32]

Val. [*Reads*] "*This letter will no doubt surprise you; both the resolution to write to you and the means of conveying it to your hands may be thought very bold in me; but I am in such a condition, that I can no longer restrain myself. Well-founded repugnance to a marriage with which I am threatened in six days, makes me risk everything; and in the determination to free myself from it by whatever means, I thought I had rather choose you than despair. Yet do not think that you owe all to my evil fate; it is not the constraint in which I find myself that has given rise to the sentiments I entertain for you; but it hastens the avowal of them, and makes me transgress the decorum which the proprieties of my sex require. It depends on you alone to make me shortly your own; I wait only until you have declared your intentions to me before acquainting you with the resolution I have taken: but, above all remember that time presses, and that two hearts, which love each other, ought to understand even the slightest hint.*" [33]

Erg. Well, sir, is not this contrivance original? For a young girl she is not so very ignorant. Would one have thought her capable of these love stratagems?

Val. Ah, I consider her altogether adorable. This evidence of her wit and tenderness doubles my love for her, and strengthens the feelings with which her beauty inspires me. . .

Erg. Here comes the dupe; think what you will say to him.

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[32] See Appendix, Note R.

[33] See Appendix, Note S.

SCENE IX.

SGANARELLE, VALÈRE, ERGASTE.[34]

Sgan. [*Thinking himself alone*] Oh, thrice and four times blessed be the law which forbids extravagance in dress![35] No longer will the troubles of husbands be so great! women will now be checked in their demands. Oh, how delighted I am with the King for this proclamation![36] How I wish, for the peace of the same husbands, that he would forbid coquetry, as well as lace, and gold or silver embroidery. I have bought the law on purpose, so that Isabella may read it aloud; and, by and bye, when she is at leisure, it shall be our entertainment after supper. [*Perceiving Valère.*] Well, Mr Sandy-hair,[37] would you like to send again love-letters in boxes of gold? You doubtless thought you had found some young flirt, eager for an intrigue, and melting before pretty speeches. You see how your presents are received! Believe me, you waste your powder and shot. Isabella is a discreet girl, she loves me, and your love insults her. Aim at some one else, and be off!

Val. Yes, yes; your merits, to which everyone yields, are too great an obstacle, sir. Though my passion be sincere, it is folly to contend with you for the love of Isabella.

Sgan. It is really folly.

Val. Be sure I should not have yielded to the fasci-

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[34] See Appendix, Note T.

[35] It is remarkable that Louis XIV., who was so extravagant himself in his buildings, dress, and general expenses, published sixteen laws against luxury; the law Sganarelle speaks of was promulgated November 27th, 1660, against the use of *guipures, cannetilles, paillettes*, etc., on men's dresses.

[36] The original has *décri*, a proclamation which forbade the manufacturing, sale, or wearing of certain fabrics.

[37] See Note 8, page 12.

nation of her charms, could I have foreseen that this wretched heart would find a rival so formidable as yourself.

Sgan. I believe it.

Val. Now I know better than to hope; I yield to you, sir, and that too without a murmur.

Sgan. You do well.

Val. Reason will have it so; for you shine with so many virtues, that I should be wrong to regard with an angry eye the tender sentiments which Isabella entertains for you.

Sgan. Of course.

Val. Yes, yes, I yield to you; but at least I pray you,—and it is the only favour, sir, begged by a wretched lover of whose pangs this day you are the sole cause,—I pray you, I say, to assure Isabella that, if my heart has been burning with love for her these three months, that passion is spotless, and has never fostered a thought at which her honour could be offended.

Sgan. Ay.

Val. That, relying solely on my heart's choice, my only design was to obtain her for my wife, if destiny had not opposed an obstacle to this pure flame in you, who captivate her heart.

Sgan. Very good.

Val. That, whatever happens, she must not think that her charms can ever be forgotten; that, to whatever decrees of Heaven I must submit, my fate is to love her to my last breath; and that, if anything checks my pursuit, it is the just respect I have for your merits.[38]

Sgan. That is wisely spoken; I shall go at once to repeat these words, which will not be disagreeable to her. But, if

[38] We are of course to read between the lines: "If there is anything which could strengthen my resolution to save her, it is the natural detestation which I feel for you."

you will listen to me, try to act so as to drive this passion from your mind. Farewell.

Erg. [*To Valère*] The excellent dupe!

SCENE X.

SGANARELLE, *alone.*

I feel great pity for this poor wretch, so full of affection. But it is unfortunate for him to have taken it into his head to try to storm a fortress which I have captured.

[*Sganarelle knocks at his door.*]

SCENE XI.

SGANARELLE, ISABELLA.

Sgan. Never did lover display so much grief for a love-letter returned unopened! At last he loses all hope, and retires. But he earnestly entreated me to tell you, that, at least, in loving you, he never fostered a thought at which your honour could be offended, and that, relying solely on his heart's choice, his only desire was to obtain you for a wife, if destiny had not opposed an obstacle to his pure flame, through me, who captivate your heart; that, whatever happens, you must not think that your charms can ever be forgotten by him; that to whatever decrees of Heaven he must submit, his fate is to love you to his last breath; and that if anything checks his pursuit, it is the just respect he has for my merits. These are his very words; and, far from blaming him, I think him a gentleman, and I pity him for loving you.

Isa. [*Aside*] His passion does not contradict my secret belief, and his looks have always assured me of its innocence.

Sgan. What do you say?

Isa. That it is hard that you should so greatly pity a man whom I hate like death; and that, if you loved

me as much as you say, you would feel how he insults me by his addresses.

Sgan. But he did not know your inclinations; and, from the uprightness of his intentions, his love does not deserve . . .

Isa. Is it good intentions, I ask, to try and carry people off? Is it like a man of honour to form designs for marrying me by force, and taking me out of your hands? As if I were a girl to live after such a disgrace!

Sgan. How?

Isa. Yes, yes, I have been informed that this base lover speaks of carrying me off by force; for my part, I cannot tell by what secret means he has learned so early that you intend to marry me in eight days [39] at the latest, since it was only yesterday you told me so. But they say that he intends to be beforehand with you, and not let me unite my lot to yours.

Sgan. That is a bad case.

Isa. Oh, pardon me! He is eminently a gentleman, who only feels towards me . . .

Sgan. He is wrong; and this is past joking.

Isa. Yes, your good nature encourages his folly. If you had spoken sharply to him just now, he would have feared your rage and my resentment; for even since his letter was rejected, he mentioned this design which has shocked me. As I have been told, his love retains the belief that it is well received by me; that I dread to marry you, whatever people may think, and should be rejoiced to see myself away from you.

Sgan. He is mad!

Isa. Before you, he knows how to disguise; and his

[39] In the letter which Isabella writes to Valère (see page 31), she speaks of a marriage with which she is threatened in six days. This is, I suppose, a pious fraud, to urge Valère to make haste, for here she mentions "eight days."

plan is to amuse you. Be sure the wretch makes sport of you by these fair speeches. I must confess that I am very unhappy. After all my pains to live honourably, and to repel the addresses of a vile seducer, I must be exposed to his vexatious and infamous designs against me!

Sgan. There, fear nothing.

Isa. For my part I tell you that if you do not strongly reprove such an impudent attempt, and do not find quickly means of ridding me of such bold persecutions, I will abandon all, and not suffer any longer the insults which I receive from him.

Sgan. Do not be so troubled, my little wife. There, I am going to find him, to give him a good blowing up.

Isa. Tell him at least plainly, so that it may be in vain for him to gainsay it, that I have been told of his intentions upon good authority; that, after this message, whatever he may undertake, I defy him to surprise me; and, lastly, that, without wasting any more sighs or time, he must know what are my feelings for you; that, if he wishes not to be the cause of some mischief, he should not require to have the same thing told twice over.

Sgan. I will tell him what is right.

Isa. But all this in such a way as to show him that I really speak seriously.

Sgan. There, I will forget nothing, I assure you.

Isa. I await your return impatiently. Pray, make as much haste as you can. I pine when I am a moment without seeing you.

Sgan. There, ducky, my heart's delight, I will return immediately.

SCENE XII.

SGANARELLE, *alone.*

Was there ever a girl more discreet and better behaved?

Oh, how happy I am! and what a pleasure it is to find a woman just after my own heart! Yes, that is how our women ought to be, and not, like some I know, downright flirts, who allow themselves to be courted, and make their simple husbands to be pointed at all over Paris. [*Knocks at Valère's door.*] Hulloa, my enterprising, fine gallant!

SCENE XIII.

VALÈRE, SGANARELLE, ERGASTE.

Val. Sir, what brings you here again?

Sgan. Your follies.

Val. How?

Sgan. You know well enough what I wish to speak to you about. To tell you plainly, I thought you had more sense. You have been making fun of me with your fine speeches, and secretly nourish silly expectations. Look you, I wished to treat you gently; but you will end by making me very angry. Are you not ashamed, considering who you are, to form such designs as you do? to intend to carry off a respectable girl, and interrupt a marriage on which her whole happiness depends?

Val. Who told you this strange piece of news, sir?

Sgan. Do not let us dissimulate; I have it from Isabella, who sends you word by me, for the last time, that she has plainly enough shown you what her choice is; that her heart, entirely mine, is insulted by such a plan; that she would rather die than suffer such an outrage; and that you will cause a terrible uproar, unless you put an end to all this confusion.

Val. If she really said what I have just heard, I confess that my passion has nothing more to expect. These expressions are plain enough to let me see that all is ended; I must respect the judgment she has passed.

Sgan. If . . . . You doubt it then, and fancy all the complaints that I have made to you on her behalf are mere pretences! Do you wish that she herself should tell you her feelings? To set you right, I willingly consent to it. Follow me; you shall hear if I have added anything, and if her young heart hesitates between us two. [*Goes and knocks at his own door.*]

SCENE XIV.

ISABELLA, SGANARELLE, VALÈRE, ERGASTE.[40]

Isa. What! you bring Valère to me! What is your design? Are you taking his part against me? And do you wish, charmed by his rare merits, to compel me to love him, and endure his visits?

Sgan. No, my love; your affection is too dear to me for that; but he believes that my messages are untrue; he thinks that it is I who speak, and cunningly represent you as full of hatred for him, and of tenderness for me; I wish, therefore, from your own mouth, infallibly to cure him of a mistake which nourishes his love.

Isa. [*to Valère*] What! Is not my soul completely bared to your eyes, and can you still doubt whom I love?

Val. Yes, all that this gentleman has told me on your behalf, Madam, might well surprise a man; I confess I doubted it. This final sentence, which decides the fate of my great love, moves my feelings so much that it can be no offence if I wish to have it repeated.

Isa. No, no, such a sentence should not surprise you. Sganarelle told you my very sentiments; I consider them to be sufficiently founded on justice, to make their full truth clear. Yes, I desire it to be known, and I ought to be believed, that fate here presents two objects to my eyes, who,

[40] See Appendix, Note U.

inspiring me with different sentiments, agitate my heart. One, by a just choice, in which my honour is involved, has all my esteem and love; and the other, in return for his affection, has all my anger and aversion. The presence of the one is pleasing and dear to me, and fills me with joy; but the sight of the other inspires me with secret emotions of hatred and horror. To see myself the wife of the one is all my desire; and, rather than belong to the other, I would lose my life. But I have sufficiently declared my real sentiments; and languished too long under this severe torture. He whom I love must use diligence to make him whom I hate lose all hope, and deliver me, by a happy marriage, from a suffering more terrible than death.

Sgan. Yes, darling, I intend to gratify your wish.

Isa. It is the only way to make me happy.

Sgan. You shall soon be so.

Isa. I know it is a shame for a young woman, so openly to declare her love.

Sgan. No, no.

Isa. But, seeing what my lot is, such liberty must be allowed me; I can, without blushing, make so tender a confession to him whom I already regard as a husband.

Sgan. Yes, my poor child, darling of my soul!

Isa. Let him think, then, how to prove his passion for me.

Sgan. Yes, here, kiss my hand.

Isa. Let him, without more sighing, hasten a marriage which is all I desire, and accept the assurance which I give him, never to listen to the vows of another. [*She pretends to embrace Sganarelle, and gives her hand to Valère to kiss.*][41]

Sgan. Oh, oh, my little pretty face, my poor little dar-

[41] This stage play is imitated by Congreve in *The Old Bachelor*, (Act iv., Scene 22) when Mrs Fondlewife goes and hangs upon her husband's neck and kisses him; whilst Bellmour kisses her hand behind Fondlewife's back.

ling, you shall not pine long, I promise you. [*To Valère*] There, say no more. You see I do not make her speak; it is me alone she loves.

Val. Well, Madam, well, this is sufficient explanation. I learn by your words what you urge me to do; I shall soon know how to rid your presence of him who so greatly offends you.

Isa. You could not give me greater pleasure. For, to be brief, the sight of him is intolerable. It is odious to me, and I detest it so much.

Sgan. Eh! Eh!

Isa. Do I offend you by speaking thus? Do I. . . .

Sgan. Heavens, by no means! I do not say that. But in truth, I pity his condition; you show your aversion too openly.

Isa. I cannot show it too much on such an occasion.

Val. Yes, you shall be satisfied; in three days your eyes shall no longer see the object which is odious to you.

Isa. That is right. Farewell.

Sgan. [*To Valère*] I pity your misfortune, but . . .

Val. No, you will hear no complaint from me. The lady assuredly does us both justice, and I shall endeavour to satisfy her wishes. Farewell.

Sgan. Poor fellow! his grief is excessive. Stay, embrace me: I am her second self.[42] [*Embraces Valère.*

SCENE XV.

ISABELLA, SGANARELLE.

Sgan. I think he is greatly to be pitied.

Isa. Not at all.

Sgan. For the rest, your love touches me to the quick, little darling, and I mean it shall have its reward. Eight

[42] See Appendix, Note V.

days are too long for your impatience; to-morrow I will marry you, and will not invite . . .

Isa. To-morrow!

Sgan. You modestly pretend to shrink from it; but I well know the joy these words afford you; you wish it were already over.

Isa. But . . .

Sgan. Let us get everything ready for this marriage.

Isa. [*Aside*] Heaven! inspire me with a plan to put it off!

ACT III. SCENE I.

ISABELLA, *alone.*

Yes, death seems to me a hundred times less dreadful than this fatal marriage into which I am forced; all that I am doing to escape its horrors should excuse me in the eyes of those who blame me. Time presses; it is night; now, then, let me fearlessly entrust my fate to a lover's fidelity.

SCENE II.

SGANARELLE, ISABELLA.[43]

Sgan. [*Speaking to those inside the house*] Here I am once more; to-morrow they are going, in my name . . .

Isa. O Heaven!

Sgan. Is it you, darling? Where are you going so late? You said when I left you that, being rather tired, you would shut yourself up in your room; you even begged that on my return I would let you be quiet till to-morrow morning.

[43] See Appendix, Note W.

Isa. It is true; but . . .

Sgan. But what?

Isa. You see I am confused; I do not know how to tell you the reason.

Sgan. Why, whatever can it be?

Isa. A wonderful secret! It is my sister who now compels me to go out, and who, for a purpose for which I have greatly blamed her, has borrowed my room, in which I have shut her up.

Sgan. What?

Isa. Could it be believed? She is in love with that suitor whom we have discarded.

Sgan. With Valère?

Isa. Desperately! Her passion is so great that I can compare it with nothing; you may judge of its violence by her coming here alone, at this hour, to confide to me her love, and to tell me positively that she will die if she does not obtain the object of her desire; that, for more than a year, a secret intercourse has kept up the ardour of their love; and that they had even pledged themselves to marry each other when their passion was new.

Sgan. Oh, the wretched girl!

Isa. That, being informed of the despair into which I had plunged the man whom she loves to see, she came to beg me to allow her to prevent a departure which would break her heart; to meet this lover to-night under my name, in the little street on which my room looks, where, counterfeiting my voice, she may utter certain tender feelings, and thereby tempt him to stay; in short, cleverly to secure for herself the regard which it is known he has for me.

Sgan. And do you think this . . .

Isa. I? I am enraged at it. "What," said I, "sister, are you mad? Do you not blush to indulge in such a love for one of those people who change every day? To forget

your sex, and betray the trust put in you by the man whom Heaven has destined you to marry?"

Sgan. He deserves it richly; I am delighted by it.

Isa. Finally my vexation employed a hundred arguments to reprove such baseness in her, and enable me to refuse her request for to-night: but she became so importunate, shed so many tears, heaved so many sighs, said so often that I was driving her to despair if I refused to gratify her passion, that my heart was brought to consent in spite of me; and, to justify this night's intrigue, to which affection for my own sister made me assent, I was about to bring Lucretia to sleep with me, whose virtues you extol to me daily; but you surprised me by your speedy return.

Sgan. No, no, I will not have all this mystery at my house. As for my brother, I might agree to it; but they may be seen by some one in the street, and she whom I am to honour with my body must not only be modest and well-born; she must not even be suspected. Let us send the miserable girl away, and let her passion . . .

Isa. Ah, you would overwhelm her with confusion, and she might justly complain of my want of discretion. Since I must not countenance her design, at least wait till I send her away.

Sgan. Well, do so.

Isa. But above all, conceal yourself, I beg of you, and be content to see her depart without speaking one word to her.

Sgan. Yes, for your sake I will restrain my anger; but as soon as she is gone, I will go and find my brother without delay. I shall be delighted to run and tell him of this business.

Isa. I entreat you, then, not to mention my name. Good night; for I shall shut myself in at the same time.

Sgan. Till to-morrow, dear . . . How impatient I am to see my brother, and tell him of his plight! The good

man has been victimised, with all his bombast![44] I would not have this undone for twenty crowns!

Isa. [*Within*] Yes, sister, I am sorry to incur your displeasure; but what you wish me to do is impossible. My honour, which is dear to me, would run too great a risk. Farewell, go home before it is too late.

Sgan. There she goes, fretting finely, I warrant. Let me lock the door, for fear she should return.

Isa. [*Going out disguised*] Heaven! abandon me not in my resolve!

Sgan. Whither can she be going? Let me follow her.

Isa. [*Aside*] Night, at least, favours me in my distress.

Sgan. [*Aside*] To the gallant's house! What is her design?

SCENE III.

VALÈRE, ISABELLA, SGANARELLE.

Val. [*Coming out quickly*] Yes, yes; I will this night make some effort to speak to . . . Who is there?

Isa. [*To Valère*] No noise, Valère; I have forestalled you; I am Isabella.

Sgan. [*Aside*] You lie, minx; it is not she. She is too staunch to those laws of honour which you forsake; you are falsely assuming her name and voice.

Isa. [*To Valère*] But unless by the holy bonds of matrimony . . .

Val. Yes; that is my only purpose; and here I make you a solemn promise that to-morrow I will go wherever you please to be married to you.

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[44] The original has *phébus*, which is often used for a swollen and pretentious style, because it is said that a work on the chase, written in the fourteenth century by Gaston, Count of Foix, in such a style, was called *Miroir de Phébus*. It is more probable that the word *phébus*, meaning showy language, is derived from the Greek φοῖβος, brilliant.

Sgan. [*Aside*] Poor deluded fool!

Val. Enter with confidence. I now defy the power of your duped Argus; before he can tear you from my love, this arm shall stab him to the heart a thousand times.

SCENE IV.

SGANARELLE, *alone.*

Oh, I can assure you I do not want to take from you a shameless girl, so blinded by her passion. I am not jealous of your promise to her; if I am to be believed, you shall be her husband. Yes, let us surprise him with this bold creature. The memory of her father, who was justly respected, and the great interest I take in her sister, demand that an attempt, at least, should be made to restore her honour. Hulloa, there! [*Knocks at the door of a magistrate.*] [45]

SCENE V.

SGANARELLE, A MAGISTRATE, A NOTARY, ATTENDANT *with a lantern.*

Mag. What is it?

Sgan. Your servant, your worship. Your presence in official garb is necessary here. Follow me, please, with your lantern-bearer.

Mag. We were going . . .

Sgan. This is a very pressing business.

Mag. What is it?

Sgan. To go into that house and surprise two persons who must be joined in lawful matrimony. It is a girl with whom I am connected, and whom, under promise of marriage, a certain Valère has seduced and got into his house. She comes of a noble and virtuous family, but . . .

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[45] See page 9, note 5.

Mag. If that is the business, it was well you met us, since we have a notary here.

Sgan. Sir?

Not. Yes, a notary royal.

Mag. And what is more, an honourable man.

Sgan. No need to add that. Come to this doorway; make no noise, but see that no one escapes. You shall be fully satisfied for your trouble, but be sure and do not let yourself be bribed.

Mag. What! do you think that an officer of justice . . .

Sgan. What I said was not meant as a reflection on your position. I will bring my brother here at once; only let the lantern-bearer accompany me. [*Aside*] I am going to give this placable man a treat. Hulloa! [*Knocks at Ariste's door.*]

SCENE VI.

ARISTE, SGANARELLE.

Ar. Who knocks? Why, what do you want, brother?

Sgan. Come, my fine teacher, my superannuated buck; I shall have something pretty to show you.

Ar. How?

Sgan. I bring you good news.

Ar. What is it?

Sgan. Where is your Léonor, pray?

Ar. Why this question? She is, as I think, at a friend's house at a ball.

Sgan. Eh! Oh yes! Follow me; you shall see to what ball Missy is gone.

Ar. What do you mean?

Sgan. You have brought her up very well indeed. It is not good to be always finding fault; the mind is captivated by much tenderness; and suspicious precautions, bolts, and bars, make neither wives nor maids virtuous; we cause them

to do evil by so much austerity; their sex demands a little freedom. Of a verity she has taken her fill of it, the artful girl; and with her, virtue has grown very complaisant.

Ar. What is the drift of such a speech?

Sgan. Bravo, my elder brother! it is what you richly deserve; I would not for twenty pistoles that you should have missed this fruit of your silly maxims. Look what our lessons have produced in these two sisters: the one avoids the gallants, the other runs after them.

Ar. If you will not make your riddle clearer . . .

Sgan. The riddle is that her ball is at Valère's; that I saw her go to him under cover of night, and that she is at this moment in his arms.

Ar. Who?

Sgan. Léonor.

Ar. A truce to jokes, I beg of you.

Sgan. I joke . . . He is excellent with his joking! Poor fellow! I tell you, and tell you again, that Valère has your Léonor in his house, and that they had pledged each other before he dreamed of running after Isabella.

Ar. This story is so very improbable . . .

Sgan. He will not believe it, even when he sees it. I am getting angry; upon my word, old age is not good for much when brains are wanting! [*Laying his finger on his forehead.*

Ar. What! brother, you mean to . . .

Sgan. I mean nothing, upon my soul! Only follow me. Your mind shall be satisfied directly. You shall see whether I am deceiving you, and whether they have not pledged their troth for more than a year past.

Ar. Is it likely she could thus have agreed to this engagement without telling me?—me! who in everything, from her infancy, ever displayed towards her a complete readiness to please, and who a hundred times protested * I would never force her inclinations.

Sgan. Well, your own eyes shall judge of the matter. I have already brought here a magistrate and a notary. We are concerned that the promised marriage shall at once restore to her the honour she has lost; for I do not suppose you are so mean-spirited as to wish to marry her with this stain upon her, unless you have still some arguments to raise you above all kinds of ridicule.

Ar. For my part, I shall never be so weak as wish to possess a heart in spite of itself. But, after all, I cannot believe . . .

Sgan. What speeches you make! Come, this might go on for ever.

SCENE VII.

SGANARELLE, ARISTE, A MAGISTRATE, A NOTARY.

Mag. There is no need to use any compulsion here, gentlemen. If you wish to have them married, your anger may be appeased on the spot. Both are equally inclined to it; Valère has already given under his hand a statement that he considers her who is now with him as his wife.

Ar. The girl . . .

Mag. Is within, and will not come out, unless you consent to gratify their desires.

SCENE VIII.

VALÈRE, A MAGISTRATE, A NOTARY, SGANARELLE, ARISTE.

Val. [*At the window of his house*] No, gentlemen; no man shall enter here until your pleasure be known to me. You know who I am; I have done my duty in signing the statement, which they can show you. If you intend to approve of the marriage, you must also put your names to this agreement; if not, prepare to take my life before you shall rob me of the object of my love.

Sgan. No, we have no notion of separating you from her. [*Aside*] He has not yet been undeceived in the matter of Isabella. Let us make the most of his mistake.

Ar. [*To Valère*] But is it Léonor?

Sgan. Hold your tongue!

Ar. But . . .

Sgan. Be quiet!

Ar. I want to know . . .

Sgan. Again! Will you hold your tongue, I say?

Val. To be brief: whatever be the consequence, Isabella has my solemn promise; I also have hers; if you consider everything, I am not so bad a match that you should blame her.

Ar. What he says is not . . .

Sgan. Be quiet! I have a reason for it. You shall know the mystery. [*To Valère*] Yes, without any more words, we both consent that you shall be the husband of her who is at present in your house.

Mag. The contract is drawn up in those very terms, and there is a blank for the name, as we have not seen her. Sign. The lady can set you all at ease by-and-by.

Val. I agree to the arrangement.

Sgan. And so do I, with all my heart. [*Aside*] We will have a good laugh presently. [*Aloud*] There, brother, sign; yours the honour to sign first.

Ar. But why all this mystery . . .

Sgan. The deuce! what hesitation. Sign, you simpleton.

Ar. He talks of Isabella, and you of Léonor.

Sgan. Are you not agreed, brother, if it be she, to leave them to their mutual promises?

Ar. Doubtless.

Sgan. Sign, then; I shall do the same.

Ar. So be it. I understand nothing about it.

Sgan. You shall be enlightened.

Mag. We will soon return.

[*Exeunt Magistrate and Notary into Valère's house.*

Sgan. [*To Ariste*] Now, then, I will give you a clue to this intrigue. [*They retire to the back of the stage.*

SCENE IX.

LÉONOR, SGANARELLE, ARISTE, LISETTE.

Leo. Ah, what a strange martyrdom! What bores all those young fools appear to me! I have stolen away from the ball, on account of them.

Lis. Each of them tried to make himself agreeable to you.

Leo. And I never endured anything more intolerable. I should prefer the simplest conversation to all the babblings[46] of these say-nothings. They fancy that everything must give way before their flaxen wigs, and think they have said the cleverest witticism when they come up, with their silly chaffing tone, and rally you stupidly about the love of an old man. For my part, I value more highly the affection of such an old man than all the giddy raptures of a youthful brain. But do I not see . . .

Sgan. [*To Ariste*] Yes, so the matter stands. [*Perceiving Léonor.*] Ah, there she is, and her maid with her.

Ar. Léonor, without being angry, I have reason to complain. You know whether I have ever sought to restrain you, and whether I have not stated a hundred times that I left you full liberty to gratify your own wishes; yet your heart, regardless of my approval, has pledged its faith,

[46] The original has *contes bleus*, literally "blue stories," because old tales, such as *The four Sons of Aymon, Fortunatus, Valentine and Orson* were formerly sold, printed on coarse paper and with blue paper cover; a kind of popular, but not political, "blue-books."

as well as its love, without my knowledge. I do not repent of my indulgence; but your conduct certainly annoys me; it is a way of acting which the tender friendship I have borne you did not merit.

Leo. I know not why you speak to me thus; but believe me, I am as I have ever been; nothing can alter my esteem for you; love for any other man would seem to me a crime; if you will satisfy my wishes, a holy bond shall unite us to-morrow.

Ar. On what foundation, then, have you, brother . . .

Sgan. What! Did you not come out of Valère's house? Have you not been declaring your passion this very day? And have you not been for a year past in love with him?

Leo. Who has been painting such pretty pictures of me? Who has been at the trouble of inventing such falsehoods?

SCENE X.

ISABELLA, VALÈRE, LÉONOR, ARISTE, SGANARELLE, MAGISTRATE, NOTARY, LISETTE, ERGASTE.[47]

Isa. Sister, I ask you generously to pardon me, if, by the freedom I have taken, I have brought some scandal upon your name. The urgent pressure of a great necessity, suggested to me, some time ago, this disgraceful stratagem. Your example condemns such an escapade; but fortune treated us differently. [*To Sganarelle*] As for you, sir, I will not excuse myself to you. I serve you much more than I wrong you. Heaven did not design us for one another. As I found I was unworthy of your love, and undeserving of a heart like yours, I vastly preferred to see myself in another's hands.

Val. [*To Sganarelle*] For me, I esteem it my greatest glory and happiness to receive her, sir, from your hands.

[47] See Appendix, Note X.

Ar. Brother, you must take this matter quietly. Your own conduct is the cause of this. I can see it is your unhappy lot that no one will pity you, though they know you have been made a fool of.

Lis. Upon my word, I am glad of this. This reward of his mistrust is a striking retribution.

Leo. I do not know whether the trick ought to be commended; but I am quite sure that I, at least, cannot blame it.

Erg. His star condemns him to be a cuckold; it is lucky for him he is only a retrospective one.

Sgan. [*Recovering from the stupor into which he has been plunged*] No, I cannot get the better of my astonishment. This faithlessness perplexes my understanding. I think that Satan in person could be no worse than such a jade! I could have sworn it was not in her. Unhappy he who trusts a woman after this! The best of them are always full of mischief; they were made to damn the whole world. I renounce the treacherous sex for ever, and give them to the devil with all my heart!

Erg. Well said.

Ar. Let us all go to my house. Come, M. Valère, to-morrow we will try to appease his wrath.

Lis. [*To the audience*] As for you, if you know any churlish husbands, by all means send them to school with us.[48]

[48] This is the last time Molière directly addressed the audience at the end of one of his plays; in *Sganarelle* (see Vol. I., page 267) he did it for the first time.

APPENDIX.

A, Page 11.

The opening scene of Sir Charles Sedley's *Mulberry Garden* is an imitation of Molière's scene of *The School for Husbands* (Act i., Scene 1.) Ariste is Sir John Everyoung, and Sganarelle Sir Samuel Forecast.

Everyoung. Well, for all this heat, let's every one Govern his own Family as he has a mind to't. I never vex myself that your Daughters live shut up as if they were in Spain or Italy; nor pray don't you trouble yourself that mine see Plays, Balls, and take their innocent Diversion, as the Custom of the Country and their Age requires.

Forecast. They are my Nieces, as they are your Daughters, and I'll tell you, you'll spoil 'em with your own Example; Youth may well be allow'd to be stark mad, when they see Age so extravagant. Is that a Dress for my elder Brother, and a Reverend Justice?

Ever. Yes, and a properer than your little Cuffs, Black Cap, and Boots there, for a gentleman.

Fore. Of eighteen, I confess, but not of Fifty.

Ever. Yes, tho' he were as old as any before the Flood; and for my part, I'll not bate a Ribbon for all the whole Tribe of what you can say: You know your self every Fool would fain be thought wise; and why an old man should not desire to be thought young, I see no reason; as long as I am whole at Heart, I'm resolved my Cloaths shall ne'er betray me.

Fore. There's no need on't, your Face does it sufficiently: Come, I'm asham'd to see you every day thus powder'd and trim'd, like an old Player, to act a young Prince. Your Periwig I like very well, it serves to keep your bald Pate warm; but that flirting Hat there looks as't were made rather for your Wit than your Head. Pray, which is most *à la mode*, Right Reverend Spark? Points of Laces, Girdle or Shoulder-belts? What say your letters out of France?

Ever. Lord, what pains you take to quarrel at my Dress and Mirth; as if Age were not tedious enough already, but we must add neglect of ourselves and moroseness towards others. Children now-a-days are not so fond of their Parents, that we need use every Art to make 'em hate us.

Fore. Well, go then, and carry your Daughters abroad, and break their Bellies with Sillabub; its the greatest kindness you can do them

now; as you have bred 'em, you may e'en keep 'em to yourself, and save their Portions; I believe nobody will be very fond of a Hide-Park Filly for a Wife; nor an old Boy that looks like a Pedlar's Pack for a Father-in-law: but now I think on't, you are such a Spark, they'd lose their Reputation with you if they had any.

Ever. For aught I see, good Brother, they stand as fair in the Opinion of the World as yours, and have done nothing but what I like very well.

Fore. What, do you count it nothing to be all day abroad, to live more in the Coach than at Home; and if they chance to keep the House an Afternoon, to have the Yard full of Sedans, the Hall full of Footmen and Pages, and their Chambers cover'd all over with Feathers and Ribbons, dancing and playing at Cards with 'em till Morning?

Ever. Why, where's the hurt of all this?

Fore. O, no hurt at all; but if they were my Daughters, I should be looking for Cradles and Nurses; I should be sorry Diana or Althea went abroad without some discreet body to look after them; or were at home indeed without employing their time in some piece of Huswifery, or at least some good Book.

Ever. You and I shall never hit it; for now I think those Women who have been least us'd to Liberty, most apt to abuse it, when they come to it.

Fore. O, this fine believing Gentleman. I should laugh heartily to see him a Grandfather without a Son-in-law.

B, Page 13.

In Miller's *The Man of Taste* (Act i., Scene 2), the scene from *The School for Husbands* (Act i., Scene 1), is imitated as follows: Sir Positive Bubble is the English for Sganarelle; and Freelove, his brother, for Ariste.

Enter SIR POSITIVE BUBBLE *and* FREELOVE, *his Brother.*

Sir Positive. Good now, Brother, don't talk so much, but let each of us live as he has a mind to't. Tell me of this, and that, and t'other. I 'll be directed by no Body, I say. My Fancy shall be my Counsellor, and I am very well satisfy'd with my own way of living.

Freelove. But every one condemns it, Brother.

Sir P. Ay, such fools as you, perhaps, Brother.

Free. I thank you heartily. A handsome Compliment!

Sir P. And I 'd fain know, methinks, what these wise critical Everyones can see in me so worthy of Reprehension.

Free. I 'll tell you, Sir *Positive.* In the first Place, your obstinate, unsociable temper, which makes you avoid all the Pleasures of Conversation, gives a whimsical Air to every thing you do, and makes you seem barbarous even in your very Dress.

Sir P. Oh ! you'd have me an Ass of Fashion, and not dress my self for my self, but to the Times ; would you, Mr Younger Brother ? You'd have me, I say, follow the way of your young Fops : Wear their little Hats which let their weak Brains evaporate ; those cross Wigs that Expose their Ears, and let the World know what Species they are of ; those curtail'd Waistcoats, the Flaps of which reach no lower than their Hips ; and those fine Stockings, with such monstrous Clocks that make 'em look like rough-footed Pidgeons. I should delight you, without doubt, if I equip'd my self in this Manner. You'd have me as foolish as any Jackanapes of 'em all.

Free. One should always comply, Brother, in some Measure with the Majority, and never make one's self be star'd at. Both Extreams are offensive, and every wise Man should dress, as he would speak, without Affectation. I would not imitate those who are at the top of the Mode, and always straining even beyond the Fashion ; but then, on the other hand, I think it wrong to avoid obstinately every thing that other People follow. 'Tis better being silly with the rest of the World than wise in opposition to every one else.

Sir P. O, is it so ! most complaisant Sir.

Free. Yes, for in following the Mode, you only wear other People's Follies, which is better than wearing your own by too much Particularity. Believe me, Brother, a Man should be singular in nothing . . . but *Wisdom* and *Humanity*.

Sir P. This is like an old Fellow now, who, to hide his grey Hairs, wears a black Wig.

Free. I see no Reason, Brother, why anyone should cast off Decency and Chearfulness. Has not Old Age Inconveniencies enough, without being both crabbed and slovenly ?

Sir P. But, be that as it will, Sir, I'm resolved not to alter my Dress in the least. I'll wear a broad-brimm'd Hat in spite of the Fashion, that my Head may have a convenient Shelter. A good large Waistcoat, thick and long, and well button'd, to keep my Stomach warm for Digestion : And Shoes wherein my Feet may have room enough, that I may be able to walk without a great Stick like a Hedge-Stake, or making wry Faces. Thus our Forefathers wisely did, and thus will I do . . . . and those that don't like me may look upon something else.

C, Page 14.

Rich. Flecknoe has borrowed in *The Damoiselles à la Mode*, from *The School for Husbands* (Act i. Scene 1) the scene between Ariste and Sganarelle, but instead of Ariste, he makes Bonhomme, the father to the damsels, give advice.

SGANARELLE, BONHOMME.

Sgan. Meddle with that you have to do withall—you'd have me bring her (Isabella) up, I'll warrant you, as you do your fine Daughters there, to be always gadding abroad a visiting.

Bonh. Well.

Sgan. Or visited at home?

Bonh. And that too.

Sgan. And have all your fine Youths and Gallants of the Time (who stoop like Pyes or Dawes when they peck at fruit alternately, their tayls above their backs), complement them, and give them Balls and Collations?

Bonh. And what then?

Sgan. Why then, y'ar a' fool, Cousin, and if you were twenty Cousins I' de tell you so;—for her, being committed to my care, either to marry her, or see her well married, I'll bring her up in manner as befits a wife, in the blessed state of ignorance, she shall see and know nothing; for this seeing and knowing too much, undid the first woman in Paradise, and has undone all your Women ever since.

Bonh. Shu'd your Women but hear you, they'd claw out your eyes for this.

Sgan. Then she shall have no Books to read in, for that but corrupts them at second hand; and if she had not learnt to write and read before her father's death, she shu'd have never learnt for Sganarelle.

Bonh. And this you count good breeding now?

Sgan. Better than your fine Daughters have, I wuss, to be always a' the mode, drest up unto the heighth, as if such Beauties simply of themselves, wear not darts killing and dangerous enough, but they must be poysoned too? No, I'le keep her untainted from the vanities of the Time.

Bonh. Alas! you know she is too wise to be corrupted by them.

Sgan. No matter for that, I'll trust rather to mine own wisdom then unto hers, and keep so strict a hand o're her, as she sha'nt be corrupted, though she wo'd.

Bonh. And I so gentle an one o're mine, as I hope they wou'd not, though they cou'd.

Sgan. Well, then, since y'ar so resolv'd, take you your course, and I'le take mine, and see who'l have the better of it at the end.

Bonh. Content, and see: Here comes my Daughters—they have done their visit it seems.

Sgan. And Isabella with them! I like not that.

D, Page 14.

The second scene of the first act of *The School for Husbands* is imitated as follows by Miller in his *Man of Taste* (Act i. Scene 2); Sganarelle is called Sir Positive, and Ariste Freelove:—

Freelove. But, Brother, however well you may think this Severity becomes one of your Age, you ought certainly to give Youth a little more Liberty . . . you understand me, Brother . . . Your rigid treatment of your Ward *Dorinda.*

Sir Positive. Lack, lack, I wish you'd mind your own Business, Brother.

Free. I beg your Pardon, Brother; but Youth must . . .

Sir P. I beg your Pardon, too, Sir, and must tell you that her Actions depend on me, and I best know what Interest I have in 'em.

Free. Have I less in those of her Sister? They are without Parents, and our Friend their Father, upon his Death-bed, left to us the Care of them; obliging both of us either to marry them our selves, or at a proper Age to dispose of 'em to others. From their very Infancy we have had full Power over them, both as Father and Husband; you chose to educate *Dorinda*, and I took upon me the charge of *Angelica*.

Sir P. Right, Sir; and therefore do you please to manage yours as you have a Mind to't, and I hope you'll give me leave to do the same by mine . . .

Free. Well, Brother, I can't help thinking . . .

Sir P. Nor I can't help thinking, Brother, and must declare it to you that what I say is right. You let yours go fine and extravagant—— with all my Heart; let her have her Chairmen and Footmen, and *Abigails* without Number——I consent to't. Let her ramble about, love Idleness, and be flatter'd by Fops till Doomsday——I am very well satisfy'd with it. But I'll have mine live according to my Fancy, not her own. Her Dress shall be of good decent Stuffs, and she shall wear Silk only on Holidays. Shall stay at Home as a wise Woman ought, and make Huswifery her whole Application. When she has any Time to spare, I'll have her quilt my Night-caps, and clear-starch my Bands for Diversion. She must shut her Ears to the Flattery of young Fellows, and never go abroad without somebody to watch her.

Free. Distrustful Cares, Bolts and Grates don't make People virtuous. 'Tis native Honour that must keep 'em within Bounds, not our Severity. 'Tis by gaining their Hearts alone that we can guide their Manners. They are much mistaken who think Government by Force alone to have more Authority than when 't is founded upon Inclination. 'Tis a Husband's Part to use a Wife so as that her own Choice, rather than outward Constraint, should put her upon doing well. I should not think my Honour very safe in the Hands of one, who only wanted an Opportunity to effect her Desire.

Sir P. A Pize on Honour and Inclination . . . . Stuff, Stuff, mere Stuff.

Free. Be it so, but these Maxims I have follow'd in my care of *Angelica*. I have not made small Liberties Crimes, but have consented to her Inclination for Balls, Plays, and such other innocent Diversions. These are things which for my part I always thought proper to form the Minds of young People, and the World is a School which instructs better in the Art of Living than all the Books or Lectures you can give 'em. Her Father's Will obliges her to marry me, but I won't for that Reason play the Tyrant over her. I very well know that our Years

are not altogether suitable, and therefore leave her entirely to her own Choice. If a Thousand pounds a Year well paid, a tender Affection and complaisant Regard can prevail on her to overlook the Disparity of Age, she may take me for her Husband. If not, she may fix where Inclination invites her. I should be glad to see her better match'd, and had rather have her marry'd to another, than marry her myself against her Will.

Sir P. Oh, how sweet the Honey-suckle is——all Sugar and Honey.

Free. This is my Humour, and thank Heaven that it is so——yours is different, but we shall see the End of it.

Sir P. See the End of it! ay, there's the Thing. When People are playing the Ass and Blockhead, if any one happens to act wiser than themselves, and won't agree with 'em in their ridiculous Conduct, then they immediately cry, *See the End of it;* when the Deuce knows, their Folly has no *End* at all.

Free. Very well, Brother.

Sir P. Ay, and not very well, Brother, let me tell you . . .

Free. Dear Brother, don't fly into a Passion.

Sir P. Not I, indeed, Sir; I am in no Passion at all, not in the least Passion——I never was in a Passion in my Life. But still it grieves me when I think of his (her) poor Father . . . . but I have done. He gave me only the Charge of one, and her I'll take Care of: Goodness be praised, she proves after my own Heart. Your Profligate will feel the Smart on't at last; yes, he will, he will at last.

Free. Come, Brother, don't let us quarrel about the Affair; I'll say no more but this, that, think what you please,

Such only for true Proselytes we own,
Who are by mild and generous Treatment won:
Those gain'd by Fear are Hypocrites alone.

E, Page 15.

In Molière's *School for Husbands* Sganarelle, the strict gentleman, and Ariste, the wise one, bring up a young ward according to their respective ideas. In Sir Charles Sedley's *Mulberry Garden* Sir John Everyoung and Sir Samuel Forecast have each two daughters, whom they educate according to their notions. In the French play both the wards, brought up differently, appear in the second scene of the first act; in the same scene of the same act of the English play only the two daughters of Sir John Everyoung make their appearance.

VICTORIA, OLIVIA, SIR JOHN EVERYOUNG, SIR SAMUEL FORECAST.

Vict. Sir, if you don't use the Coach yourself, my Sister and I wou'd go abroad this Afternoon.

Ever. Take it Children, but don't keep the Horses out too late.

Fore. What! Never ask 'em whither they're going? By your

favour I'le put that Question to 'em. Come hither, Victoria, what visits do you intend this Afternoon?

Vict. None Sir, we 're only going a Rambling.

Fore. A Rambling! methinks that Word sounds very prettily i' th' Mouth of a young Maid; next time I ask 'em whither they 're going, I believe they'll answer me, To drink a Bottle or two: But whither pray?

Oliv. For that, Sir, we shall take counsel of the Weather; either up into the City, or towards the Park.

Fore. What, none but you two?

Oliv. We intended to call on my cousins Althea and Diana.

Fore. They took Physick this Morning, and are not well, you'll but lose your labour.

Vict. Sir, they sent for us but an hour ago.

Fore. You had better go without 'em, they are all undrest; to stay for 'em would but make you lose the sweet of the Evening.

Ever. Brother, what, are you jealous of them too? I assure you they are no Men in Women's Cloaths.

Fore. I am not jealous of 'em, but since you'd have it so, I'd as live they keep away.

Ever. And I'd as live you'd keep away, till you understand yourself better; what? You think your Daughters, like your Money, never Safe, but under Lock and Key; who wou'd you have 'um converse with, if not with their Relations?

Fore. With those that are a-kin to 'em in Manners and Behaviour, such as they may learn some goodness of; I see nothing they can learn here but vanity.

Vict. Sister, they begin to be angry, come let 's leave 'em till the storm be over. [*Exeunt.*

F, Page 19.

Richard Flecknoe, in *The Damoiselles à la Mode* (Act i., Scene 2), imitates this scene from *The School for Husbands* (Act i., Scene 2), but instead of Leonor, there are two "damoiselles," Anne and Mary; the innocent Isabella, and the ladies'-maid, Lysette, are the same in both plays.

BONHOMME, SGANARELLE.

Enter MADEMOISELLE ANNE, MARY, ISABELLA, *and* LYSETTE.

Mary. And do's he coop you up so.

Isabella. So as you see.

Mary. Nor suffers you to be visited by none.

Isa. By none but you, and that he grumbles at too!

Anne. How d'ye pass your time then—learn to Preserve perhaps.

Lysette. I—to preserve her shoes, if she never stirs abroad.

Mary. And yet do's he make Love t' ye.

Isa. I, as Cats do, or High Dutch to their Mistresses, you'd think they chid the while.

Lys. And I'd scold as fast, were it to me.

Mary. Come, you shall go abroad with us and take the air.

Isa. He'll never suffer it.

Mary. I'le warrant you.

Sgan. Now, whither away so fast w' ye?

Isa. I tremble, every joint of me!

Lys. Fie for shame! e're I stand in such awe of any man, I'd see him hang'd, if he were worth hanging.

Mary. W'ave intreated our Cousin here, along with us, to take the air.

Sgan. For you, you may go if you please; but for her, she shall tarry at home, I'le have no gadding with her.

Bon. Pray let me intreat for her this once,—we must allow youth some Recreation.

Sgan. Youth's a fool, and Age is little better; she 'as Recreation enough at home, she needs not go abroad for 't.

Lys. What? to make you Night-caps? or piece your old Stockins at heels perhaps!

Sgan. I'le none of these Recreations, I, in her, whom I intend to make my wife.

Lys. Your wife! what shou'd you do with a wife, I pray? . . . .

Bon. Peace, huswife, y'ar too bold.

Mary. Shan't we intreat so much for her this once, then?

Sgan. No indeed Sha'nt you, and I'd intreat you to come and visit her no more if this be your business,—I fear she learns no good of you, so she does not.

Lys. More then of you for all your sowre countenance and venegar meen,—i' faith, i' faith were I as she, if you should use me thus, I'd make you a Cuckold if ever I marryed you.

Sgan. And were she as you, I think she wou'd indeed; but as she is, I'le look to her well enough, she shall have none of your mother's Daughters for Counsellors.

Lys. And if she had, she'd be better counselled then by your father's son, I wuss.

Bon. Come, come, leave your prattle, and Daughters, go you home . . . .

Sgan. I, good Lady Eve, begone, and take your Tempter there, your waiting-woman along w' ye.

Lys. I' faith, i' faith were I your Tempter, I'd only tempt you to hang yourself or so.

Bon. Go, go, begone I say, and I'le but only go dispatch a little business I have i' the Town, and strait ways follow you. [*Exeunt Damoiselles.*] As for you, Cousin, I'ave only this to say t' ye before I go,—those who seek to be rather feared then lov'd, shall find themselves rather hated then fear'd at last—and so farewell.

Sgan. Very good—and I've only this to say to you too before you go—let them hate me so they fear me, and so farewell to you again. [*Exit Bonhomme.*] [*Manent Sganarelle and Isabella.*]

Sgan. So—now get you in, and expect no more this liberty, d'ye hear? She whom I intend to make my wife must imagine my house is all the world, and that there's no other company in the world but only she and I.

Isa. Bless me! that imagination wou'd make me desperate. [*Aside.*

Sgan. So—make your curtsie, and begone,—very good—and look to your business, d'ye hear!

Isa. Which is only to be rid of you, which, till I am [*aside*], I will be nothing but Plot and Stratagem. [*Exit.*

Sgan. Now let me think a little.

G, Page 20.

This scene from *The School for Husbands* (Act i., Scene 5), is imitated as follows, by Richard Flecknoe, in *The Damoiselles à la Mode* (Act i., Scene 3); Ergaste is, in the French play, the servant, in the English, the friend of Valère.

Enter VALERIO *and* ERGASTO, SGANARELLE.

Valerio. Yonders the waking Dragon that has my Golden fruit in Custody, I'd fain be acquainted with him.

Sganarelle. Let me see, what am I about now? to marry—very good, an honourable calling! and if there be any pleasure and contentment in this life, your marryed man has it. I'le go marry presently, I am resolved on it. [*Valerio salutes him, and he minds not.*]

Ergasto. He sees you not, to him agen.

Sgan. But stay, Sganarelle, consider a little first, how besides the care and trouble of wife and children, all marryed men, or are, or may be Cuckolds——hum! I'le none of't, marry who's list for me.

Val. He's blind a' this side, sure. I'le try the other.

Sgan. Well, I'le take some further time to consider on't; mean time I'le out of Town as soon as I can, for there's no keeping a woman here without a hundred eyes.

Erg. Now, now.

Sgan. [*Espies him.*] Whoo! what a do's here, this is no English quaker sure, he makes so many Reverences—agen? sure he's some young Reveller, practising to make his honours here—with me, Sir?

Val. Yes Sir, I have the happiness to be your Neighbour here hard by.

Sgan. It may be so.

Val. I shu'd be glad of your better acquaintance.

Sgan. And why so, I pray?

Val. Only to come and discourse w' ye sometime, o' th' affairs o' th' time and news o' th' Town, as who's marryed, to whom.

Sgan. Let them be hanged, what care I.

Val. And what's said or done at Court, amongst the rest, d' ye hear the News, Sir?

Sgan. No, nor I don't care to hear it.

Val. No fast'ning any discourse on him. [*Aside*] I perceive, Sir, you live solitary and retir'd at home.

Sgan. What's that to you?

Val. And shu'd be glad of company sometimes.

Sgan. Who told you so?

Val. And i' faith how d' ye pass your time at home?

Sgan. Why, as I please my self.

Val. You do very well in't, and so shu'd every one do that is wise; and if you please, I shu'd be glad sometimes to come and pass an Evening wi' ye, or so.

Sgan. Serviteur. [*Exit abruptly.*

H, Page 22.

This scene from *The School for Husbands* (Act i., Scene 6), is rendered in Flecknoe's *The Damoiselles à la Mode* (Act i., Scene 3), as follows:—

VALERIO *and* ERGASTO.

Ergasto. Ha, ha, ha! If he fight at this ward as he speaks, I'le warrant any one for hitting him. Now, what d' ye think of him, and of his brisk replyes?

Valerio. Why, I think he's one of the race of the antient Spartans, or Pythagoreans, h'as so few words with him.

Erg. And those he has are all rusty, and want oyling; the . . speaks nothing but old Iron and Hobnails.

Val. Rather daggers and Punyards that stab me to the heart. What a misery is't to have her I love guarded by such a Cerberus as he?

Erg. Rather 'tis your happiness; for take this from me, a Woman guarded is half won; and he but delivers her from her Guardian, gains the other half of her.

Val. I, but how to do't, there's all the difficulty.

Erg. Think, think, have you no invention in you? I never saw a man so dull. Did you ever speak unto her?

Val. Never.

Erg. Nor writ unto her?

Val. Neither.

Erg. Why, then, y'ave done nothing yet;—has she no servants to made your confidents?

Val. None as I know of; only as often as she goes abroad I follow her; nor do's the Hyacinth, that amorous flower, ere follow the Sun with more assidual regards than I do her.

Erg. But do's she take notice of it?

Val. That I know not neither.

Erg. Why, then you know nothing. Think, think on some way to let her know your love, for shame.

Val. I, but what? the more I think on it, the more impossible I find it.

Erg. Hang impossibilities! There's no such things in nature, 'tis hope enough, you love a Woman, and she a living one; Pigmalion only lov'd the dead statue of one, and yet (you see) he put life into it at last. —Think, think agen then, and I'le warrant you,

The brain's a fertile soil; and let our wit
But sow the seed, Time soon will ripen it.

I, Page 24.

The short scene from Molière's *The School for Husbands* (Act ii. Scene 1) is thus developed by Murphy in *The School for Guardians* (Act i., Scene 3), Lovibond is the English Sganarelle, though hardly so natural as the French one. Harriet is an imitation of Isabella, and makes a dupe of her guardian in the same manner as her French prototype.

Scene: *Lovibond's House.*

LOVIBOND, HARRIET.

Lovibond. My blossom! my lovely little ward! to-morrow makes you the queen of my heart. But you must be mild in authority, for you know——

Harriet. Yes, I know how tender you have been. Your confining me here for so many days, is to me a proof of the tenderest love.

Lov. Yes, it is a mark of my affection.

Har. There are many reasons why I should not venture abroad; more than you dream of.

Lov. You alarm me: What reasons?

Har. Why, the danger is——No—you'll be for fighting the odious man.

Lov. No—I'll not fight—I'll live for you.

Har. But will you follow my advice, and speak to him calmly, without passion?

Lov. I will. Let me hear: what's the matter.

Har. Why, that Mr Belford, whose visits you used to encourage——

Lov. I have not liked him a good while—what of him?

Har. Oh! he's a wicked man. He has vile designs in his head, and would fain have me listen to his proposals.

Lov. The impudence of the young men of this age!

Har. Your back is no sooner turned than he raps at the door, and at the windows, and disgraces me with all the neighbours. My character will be ruined, [*pretends to cry*] unless you find some method to——

Lov. Don't be alarmed, my sweet: I'll bar my doors, and you shan't stir out this twelve month.

Har. That won't do.

Lov. Then you shall never go out at all.

Har. That's some comfort. But, in the meantime, to have my reputation blasted by an abandoned libertine—[*She cries*] Cæsar's wife should not only be virtuous, but free from suspicion.

Lov. The sensible girl! This is owing to her education. Her sister Mary-Ann could not make such a remark. I'll go and swear the peace against him.

Har. I wish you would.

Lov. I'll do it directly. I'll let him know by a justice's warrant that Cæsar's wife is not to be trifled with.

Har. And pray tell him, I hate him; that he may come as often as he will under my window, but it will be to no purpose, for I shall not endeavour to let him in.

Lov. He shall hear it.

Har. Let him know that, though he is young, and handsome, all his charms are lost upon me.

Lov. I'll do it.

Har. Tell him you have been a father to me: that I consider you still as my father, and I think it unnatural to love giddy young men, when I can be so much better off with you.

Lov. He shall hear it on every side of his ears.

Har. Ay, but without loss of time. I shan't be easy till he knows my mind.

Lov. Nor I. It is fit he should know your mind.

Har. Yes, and tell him, if he should come when you are out, not all his winning ways shall prevail on me to run away with him.

Lov. You have charmed me; transported me; ravished me; get up stairs. I'll seek him this moment—Ha! ha!—this all springs from her good sense: this is knowing right from wrong—ha! ha! [*Exit.*

Har. Be sure you tell him every word—and if Mr Belford does but understand every word as I intend it, then I still may wing my flight to his dear arms. A new scheme this of mine! But love inspired it, and love may crown it with success. [*Exit.*

J, Page 24.

Flecknoe has imitated this scene from *The School for Husbands* (Act ii. Scenes 1 and 2), in *The Damoiselles à la Möde* (Act i., Scene 4).

Enter SGANARELLE and ISABELLA.

Sgan. Say no more, I know the man, and the house he lives at—Valerio, d'ye call him?

Isa. So they tell me, Sir. [*Aside.*] Heaven prosper my plot, as my intent is innocent.

Sgan. Go, go in, and let me alone with him: Gramercy for this intelligence, i' faith now I see thou lov'st me.

Isa. I, as I do a Snake or Toad. [*Aside.*] [*Exit.*

Sgan. I! are you such an one indeed! I'm glad I know it,—no wonder he made me so many Reverences, and desir'd to come and visit me,—I'll none of that I thank you; that were to let a Thief into my house, or Wolf into my sheepfold; but he that's warn'd is arm'd. I'll to him strait, and tell him soundly of it;—but stay before I go, let me make all sure at home.

K, Page 25.

In Flecknoe's *The Damoiselles à la Mode* (Act i., Scene 6), *The School for Husbands* (Act ii., Scenes 3 and 4), is imitated as follows:—

VALERIO, ERGASTO, SGANARELLE.

Val. Who knocks there? Oh, Sir, is it you; y'ar very welcome.

Sgan. I'le none of your welcomes.

Erg. He's at 's old ward agen.

Sgan. Is your name Valerio!

Val. It is, Sir, at your service.

Sgan. I'le none of your services neither, but I come to ask you whether you know that I am Guardian to a certain Damoiselle call'd Isabella there.

Val. I do Sir, very well.

Sgan. Well then, if you know it, I need not tell you so—next, if you know that, having the disposing of her in Marriage, I intend to marry her myself.

Val. That I know not yet.

Sgan. Well then, if you don't, I'd have you know so much, and that I take it very unkindly at your hands, that she can never stir abroad, but you are hanting her like a Ghost, and following her so, she may as well be rid of her shadow as of you.

Val. I, Sir!

Sgan. I, you, Sir.

Val. Who tells you so, I pray?

Sgan. Marry those who best can tell, even she herself.

Erg. There's some comfort, she takes notice of thee yet.

Sgan. And besides she bids me tell you that she marks the amorous glances that you give her too.

Erg. Ah, ha, Boyes! this works.

Sgan. And having perceiv'd thus much she wou'd advise you to take some other course, for this won't do, she says.

Erg. Why, this is clear, she's thine own I'le warrant thee, boy.

Sgan. And this, she says, she wou'd have told you soon, but that she wanted opportunity of a fit messenger, and was loath to trouble me.

Erg. A notable witty wench!

Val. Well, Sir, I'm sorry I've put you to this trouble, and pray tell her I follow her, 'tis true, and look on her with the same Reverence as adoring Persians look upon the Sun.

Sgan. Pray let's have no more of your Reverence; w'ave had enough of them to-day already, and for your looks, pray keep them to yourself, for if I catch you looking on her any more, ——

Val. What then?

Sgan. Why then— I'd intreat you to look on some body else.

Val. Oh! is that all.

Sgan. And so farewell unto ye.

Val. I dare not bid him farewell agen now, least he shou'd be angry —well, what dost think of this?

Sgan. I've made him stare like a Pig! little did he look for such a message from her.

Erg. Why she's done thy business to thy hand, and prevented thee.

Val. Peace, he observes us, let us in, and think what use to make of it. [*Exeunt.*

L, Page 28.

This scene (Act ii., Scene 3) from Molière's *School for Husbands*, is imitated by Otway in *The Soldier's Fortune* (Act ii., Scene 1); Sir Davy Dunce fills the part of Sganarelle, and Beaugard is Valère; but in the French play the tutor complains that his ward is annoyed by the attentions of the lover; in the English the husband returns the portrait of Beaugard, which his wife had given him.

Beaugard. Hark you, Friend, have you not a Wife?

Sir Davy Dunce. I have a Lady, Sir—oh, and she's mightily taken with this picture of yours; she was so mightily proud of it she could not forbear shewing it me, and telling too who it was sent her.

Beau. And has she been long a Jilt? Has she practised the Trade for any time? . . . .

Sir D. Poor Devil, how he rails, ha, ha, ha: Look you, sweet Soul, as I told you before, there are Laws, there are Laws, but those are things not worthy your Consideration: Beauty's your Business. But, dear Vagabond, trouble thyself no further about my Spouse, let my Doxy rest in Peace, she's Meat for thy Master, old Boy . . .

Beau. Sir, I wish all your noble Family hang'd from the bottom of my Heart.

Sir D. Moreover, Captain Swash, I must tell you my Wife is an honest Woman, of a Virtuous Disposition, one that I have lov'd from her Infancy, and she deserves it by her faithful dealing in this Affair, for that she has discover'd loyally to me the treacherous Designs laid against her Chastity, and my Honour.

Beau. By this Light the Beast weeps! [*Aside.*

Sir D. Truly I cannot but weep for joy, to think how happy I am in a sincere, faithful, and loving Yoke-fellow. She charg'd me too to tell you into the Bargain, that she is sufficiently satisfy'd of the most secret Wishes of your Heart.

Beau. I am glad on't.

Sir D. And that 'tis her Desire, that you would trouble yourself no more about the matter.

Beau. With all my Heart.

Sir D. But henceforward behave yourself with such Discretion as becomes a Gentleman.

Beau. Oh, to be sure, most exactly!

Sir D. And let her alone to make the best use of those innocent Freedoms I allow her, without putting her Reputation in hazard.

Beau. As how, I beseech you ——

Sir D. By your impertinent and unseasonable Address.

Beau. And this News you bring me by a particular Commission from your sweet Lady.

Sir D. Yea, Friend, I do; and she hopes you'll be sensible dear Heart, of her good meaning by it: These were her very Words, I neither add nor diminish, for Plain-dealing is my Mistress's Friend.

Beau. Then all the Curses I shall think on this Twelve-month light on her, and as many more on the next Fool that gives Credit to the Sex.

M, Page 28.

The soliloquy of Sganarelle in *The School for Husbands* (Act ii., Scene 4), is imitated as follows by Flecknoe in his *Damoiselles à la Mode.*

Sganarelle. I think I have put him to his dumps. I marry, here's a vertuous woman now! that's offended if a man but look on her! where shall you find such another? And how long wou'd it be e're my Cousin's Daughters wou'd do so much, who dress up themselves a purpose to be lookt upon? but Isabella defyes them all, and I defie all the world to shew me such another; thanks to my care of her, and her good Breeding and Education.

N, Page 28.

The Fifth Scene, Second Act, of *The School for Husbands* is as follows in Flecknoe's *The Damoiselles à la Mode* (Act viii. Scene 2):—

ISABELLA, SGANARELLE.

Isabella. [*a Box in her hand.*]

I've done an Act here, of so bold a strain
As well might put a Virgin to her shame;
But Love and my extream necessity,
Or never blush, or let them blush for me. *Aside.*

Well, ha' ye been there?

Sganarelle. I have.

Isa. And what says he?

Sgan. Why he says, He looks upon you or so, sometimes it is true, but he means no harm by't.

Isa. And wou'd you believe him? y'ad best say he meant no harm by this too. Just now, as I was standing at my Window to take the air, who shou'd come by but he? and what did he? but just as I turn'd my back, threw me this Box with this Letter in it here, into my Chamber.

Sgan. How, a Letter!

Isa. I, and when ha'd done, away he cut like Lightning, or I had thrown it like a Thunderbolt at his head,—insolent as he is! to offer to send his Letters unto me!

Sgan. What's in't? dost know?

Isa. Not I, nor desire to know.

Sgan. Why hast thou not re'd it then?

Isa. Not for a world; for, but imagin, Sir, what dishonour 'twere to me, and encouragement to him, if he shu'd think, I'd the vicious curiosity to open and read his Letters!

Sgan. Let me see't, I'le read it then.

Isa. That were the same, for then he'd think 't were I;—no, pray Sir, let me send it back as't is.

Sgan. Well, go thy ways for a mirrour of Prudence and Discretion!

Isa. Besides words are but air, but when inclos'd in Letters once, I shou'd think their poysnous damp wou'd kill me presently, shou'd I but open them;—cou'd I but find one now to send it by.

Sgan. I'le do't, I'le do't.

Isa. And tell him how I scorn to read his Letters.

Sgan. Let me alone.

Isa. Yet, Sir, to satisfie your Curiosity, you may read it if you please.

Sgan. Not I, I promise you, without an Antidote, if't be so dangerous as you say it is.

Isa. Well, then pray carry it him as it is; methinks I am in pain until he have it.

Sgan. I'le soon rid thee of that pain I'le warrant thee, and assure thyself I'le marry thee a week sooner then I thought to have done, only for this my little pretty Rogue. [*Caresses her.*

Isa. His kindness and unkindness equally do's kill.
As poyson, though sugred, is poyson still. [*Aside.*] [*Exit.*

O, Page 29.

Wycherley in *The Gentleman Dancing-Master* (Act i., Scene 1) has partly imitated the second and fifth scenes of the second act of *The School for Husbands*, though Hippolita (Isabella) does not send a letter, but simply a message. Sganarelle is represented by Monsieur de Paris a vain coxcomb, newly returned from France.

Hippolita. You know my chamber is backward, and has a door into the gallery which looks into the back yard of a tavern, whence Mr Gerrard, once spying me at the window, has often since attempted to come in at that window by the help of the leads of a low building adjoining; and indeed, 'twas as much as my maid and I could do to keep him out.

Monsieur de Paris. Au, le coquin !—

Hip. But nothing is stronger than aversion; for I hate him perfectly, even as much as I love you . . . This discovery is an argument, sure, of my love to you.

Mons. Ay, ay, say no more, cousin; I doubt not your amour for me, because I doubt not your judgment. But what's to be done with this fanfaron?—I know where he eats to-night.—I'll go find him out, ventre-bleu !—

Hip. O, my dear cousin, you will not make a quarrel of it? I thought what your promise would come to !

Mons. You'd have a man of honour——

Hip. Keep his promise.

Mons. And lose his mistress?—That were not for my honour, ma foy !

Hip. Cousin, though you do me the injury to think I could be false, do not do yourself the injury to think any one could be false to you. Will you be afraid of losing your mistress? To show such a fear to your rival, were for his honour, and not for yours, sure.

Mons. Nay, cousin, I'd have you know I was never afraid of losing my mistress in earnest.—Let me see the man can get my mistress from me, jarnie !—But he that loves must seem a little jealous.

Hip. Not to his rival: those that have jealousy hide it from their rivals. . . . I would have you rally him soundly: do not spare him a jot.—But shall you see him to-night?

Mons. Ay, ay.

Hip. Yes; pray be sure to see him for the jest's sake.

Mons. I will—for I love a jest as well as any bel esprit of 'em all—da !

Hip. Ay, and rally him soundly; be sure you rally him soundly, and tell him just thus:—that the lady he has so long courted, from the great window of the Ship tavern, is to be your wife to-morrow, unless he come at his wonted hour of six in the morning to her window to

forbid the bans; for 'tis the first and last time of asking; and if he come not, let him for ever hereafter stay away, and hold his tongue.

Mons. Ha! ha! ha! a very good jest, teste bleu!

Hip. And if the fool should come again, I would tell him his own, I warrant you, cousin. My gentleman should be satisfied for good and all, I'd secure him.

Mons. Bon, bon . . . Ha! ha! ha! cousine, thou art a merry grig, ma foy!—I long to be with Gerrard; and I am the best at improving a jest—I shall have such divertissement to-night, teste bleu!

Hip. He'll deny, may be, at first, that he ever courted any such lady.

Mons. Nay, I am sure he'll be ashamed of it, I shall make him look so sillily, teste non!—I long to find him out.—Adieu, adieu, la cousine!

Hip. Shall you be sure to find him?

Mons. Indubitablement, I'll search the town over, but I'll find him. Ha! ha! ha! [*Exit Monsieur, and returns*]: But I'm afraid, cousine, if I should tell him you are to be my wife to-morrow, he would not come: now, I am for having him come for the jest's sake, ventre!

Hip. So am I, cousin, for having him come too, for the jest's sake.

Mons. Well, well, leave it to me: ha! ha! ha!

P, Page 30.

Otway, in *The Soldier's Fortune* (Act iii., Scene 1), has imitated as follows Molière's *School for Husbands* (Act ii., Scene 5). Isabella is called in the English play Lady Dunce.

Lady Dunce. I wonder, Sir Davy, you will serve me at this rate. Did you not promise me to go in my behalf to Beaugard, and correct him according to my instructions for his Insolence?

Sir Davy. So I did, Child; I have been with him, Sweetheart; I have told him all to a Tittle, I gave him back again the Picture to; but as the Devil would have it, I forgot the Ring, faith I did.

Lady D. Did you purpose, Sir . . . to render me ridiculous to the Man I abominate? What scandalous Interpretation, think you, must he make of my retaining any Trifle of his, sent me on so dishonourable Terms?

Sir D. Really, my Lamb, thou art in the right; yes, I went back afterwards, dear Heart, and did the Business to some purpose.

Lady D. I am glad that you did, with all my Heart.

Sir D. I gave him his Lesson, I'll warrant him.

Lady D. Lesson! what Lesson had you to give him?

Sir D. Why, I told him as he lik'd that Usage, he might come again; ha, ha, ha.

Lady D. Ay, and so let him.

Sir D. With all my Heart, I'll give him free leave, or hang me; tho' thou wouldst not imagine how the poor Devil's alter'd. La, you

there now, but as certainly as I stand here, that Man is troubled that he swears he shall not rest Day nor Night, till he has satisfied thee; pr'ythee be satisfied with him if it is possible, my Dear, pr'ythee do. I promis'd him before I left him to tell thee as much: for the poor Wretch looks so simply, I cou'd not chuse but pity him, I vow and swear, ha, ha, ha. . . . .

Lady D. Sir Davy, I must tell you, that I cannot but resent your so soon Reconcilement with a Man that I hate worse than Death; and that if you lov'd me with half that Tenderness which you profess, you wou'd not forget an Affront so palpably and so basely offer'd me.

Sir D. Why, Chicken, where's the Remedy? What's to be done? How would'st thou have me deal with him?

Lady D. Cut his Throat.

Sir D. Bless us for ever! cut his Throat! what, do Murder?

Lady D. Murder, yes, anything to such an incorrigible Enemy of your Honour, one that has resolv'd to persist in abusing of you;—see here this Letter, this I receiv'd since I last parted with you;, just now it was thrown into my Chair by an impudent Lacquey of his, kept o' purpose for such Employments.

Sir D. Let me see: A Letter indeed!—for the Lady Dunce. Damn'd Rogue, treacherous Dog, what can he say in the Inside now? here's a villain.

Lady D. Yes, you had best break it open, you had so; 'tis like the rest of your Discretion.

Sir D. Lady, if I have an Enemy, it is best for me to know what Mischief he intends me; therefore, with your Leave, I will break it open.

Lady D. Do, do, to have him believe that I was pleas'd enough with it to do it myself: if you have the Spirit of a Gentleman in you, carry it back, and dash it, as it is, in the Face of that audacious Fellow. . . .

Sir D. A Gentleman; yes, Madam, I am a Gentleman, and the World shall find that I am a Gentleman.—I have certainly the best Woman in the World.

Lady D. What do you think must be the End of all this? I have no Refuge in the World, but your Kindness; had I a jealous Husband now, how miserable must my Life be! . . .

Sir D. Poor Fool! No, Dear, I am not jealous, nor never will be jealous of thee: Do what thou wilt, thou shalt not make me jealous; I love thee too well to suspect thee.

Lady D. Ah, but how long will you do so?

Sir D. How long? as long as I live I warrant thee, I—— don't talk to a Body so: I cannot hold if thou dost, my Eyes will run over, Poor Fool! poor Birdsnies! poor Lambkin!

Lady D. But will you be so kind to me to answer my Desires? will you once more endeavour to make that Traitor sensible that I have too just an Esteem of you, not to value his Addresses as they deserve.

Sir D. Ay, ay, I will.

Lady D. But don't stay away too long, Dear; make what haste ye can, I shall be in pain till I see you again.

Sir D. My Dear, my Love, my Babby, I'll be with thee in a Moment: How happy am I above the rest of Men! . . . Child, don't be troubled, prythee, don't be troubled, was there ever such a Wife? well, da, da, da: don't be troubled, pr'ythee don't be troubled, pr'ythee don't be troubled, da, da. [*Exit.*

Q, Page 30.

Otway in *The Soldier's Fortune* (Act iii., Scene 1), makes Sir Davy Dunce (Sganarelle) give the letter of Lady Dunce (Isabella) to Beaugard (Valère), whilst in Molière's *School for Husbands* the letter is handed to Ergaste.

Sir Davy Dunce. Sir, Sir, Sir, one Word with you, Sir! Captain, Captain, noble Captain, one Word, I beseech you.

Beaugard. With me, Friend?

Sir D. Yes with me, my no Friend.

Beau. Sir Davy, my Intimate, my Bosom Physician——

Sir D. Ah, Rogue! damn'd Rogue!

Beau. My Confessor, my dearest Friend, I ever had——

Sir D. Dainty Wheedle, here's a Fellow for ye.

Beau. One that has taught me to be in love with Virtue, and shewn me the ugly Inside of my Follies.

Sir D. Your humble Servant.

Beau. Is that all? If you are as cold in your Love as you are in your Friendship, Sir Davy, your Lady has the worst time on't of any one in Christendom.

Sir D. So she has, Sir, when she cannot be free from the insolent Sollicitations of such Fellows as you are, Sir.

Beau. As me, Sir? why, who am I, good Sir Domine Doddlepate?

Sir D. So, take notice he threatens me, I'll have him bound to the Peace instantly; will you never have remorse or Conscience, Friend? have you banish'd all Shame from your Soul? Do you consider my Name is Sir Davy Dunce? that I have the most virtuous Wife living? Do you consider that? Now how like a Rogue he looks again! what a Hang-dog Leer was that!

Beau. Your virtuous Wife, Sir! you are always harping upon that String, Sir Davy.

Sir D. . . . See you this? Cast your Eyes upon this, this Letter, Sir; did not you promise this very Day, to abandon all manner of Proceedings of this Nature, tending to the Dishonour of me and my Family?

Beau. Letter, Sir? what the Devil does he mean now? Let me

see, for the Lady Dunce; this is no Scrawl of mine, I'll be sworn; by Jove, her own hand! What a Dog was I! Forty to one but I had play'd the Fool, and spoil'd all again. Was there ever so charming a Creature breathing?—Did your Lady deliver this to your Hands, Sir?

Sir D. Ev'n her own self in Person, Sir, and bade me tell you, Sir, that she has too just an Esteem of me, Sir, not to value such a Fellow as you are, as you deserve.

Beau. Very good. [*Reads the Letter*] *I doubt not but this Letter will surprize you*—(in troth, and so it does extremely)—*but reflect upon the manner of conveying it to your Hand as kindly as you can.*

Sir D. Ay, a damn'd Thief, to have it thrown into the Chair by a Footman.

Beau. [*Reads*] *Would Sir Davy were but half so kind to you as I am.*

Sir D. Say you so, insinuating Knave?

Beau. But he, I am satisfy'd, is so severely jealous that, except you contrive some way to let me see you this Evening, I fear all will be hopeless.

Sir D. Impudent Traitor, I might have been a Monster yet before I got my Supper . . .

Beau. In order to which either appear yourself, or somebody for you, half an Hour hence, in the Piazza, when more may be considered of. Adieu.

Sir D. Thanks to you, noble Sir, with all my Heart; you are come I see accordingly, but as a Friend I am bound in Conscience to tell you the Business won't do, the Trick won't pass, Friend; you may put up your Pipes and march off. . . . Poor Wretch, ha, ha, ha.

R, Page 31.

In Wycherley's *Country-Wife* (Act iv., Scene 4), Mr Pinchwife steals softly behind his wife, and discovers her writing a letter to Horner. This letter is an imitation of the one Isabella sends to Valère (Act ii., Scene 8.)

"*First, I am to beg your pardon for my boldness in writing to you, which I'd have you to know I would not have done, had not you said first you loved me so extremely, which, if you do, you will never suffer me to lie in the arms of another man whom I loathe, nauseate, and detest . . . Therefore, I hope you will speedily find some way to free me from this unfortunate match, which was never, I assure you, of my choice, but I'm afraid 't is already too far gone; however, if you love me, as I do you, you will try what you can do: but you must help me away before to-morrow, or else, alas! I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our* ——

S, Page 31.

In Flecknoe's *The Damoiselles à la Mode* (Act viii., Scene 2), as well as in Molière's *School for Husbands*, Sganarelle gives Isabella's letter to Ergaste. The letter is in the English play as follows :—

NOBLE SIR,—*If I have rightly interpreted your Love, I hope you will not be so unjust to misinterpret mine; I am here in the hands of one I hate, and if you deliver me not the sooner, death shall; meantime, I am the miserablest alive, unless you find some way to make me happy.—Yours till Death,* ISABELLA.

T, Page 32.

Otway has imitated in *The Soldier's Fortune* (Act ii., end) the ninth scene of the second act of Molière's *School for Husbands*, but Sir Davy Dunce (Sganarelle) presents to Beaugard (Valère) in his wife's name a ring which she pretends he had sent to her :—

Sir D. O Sir, 'tis you I was seeking for, ha, ha, ha. What shall I say to him now to terrify him? [*Aside.*

Beau. Me, Sir! ——

Sir D. Ay, you, Sir, if your Name be Captain Beaugard. How like a fool he looks already?—

Beau. What you please, Sir.

Sir D. Sir, I would speak a word with you, if you think fit. What shall I do now to keep my Countenance? [*Aside.*

Beau. Can I be so happy, Sir, as to be able to serve you in any thing?

Sir D. No Sir; ha, ha, ha: I have Commands of Service to you, Sir; O Lord, ha, ha, ha.

Beau. Me, Sir!

Sir D. Ay, Sir; you, Sir: But put on your Hat, Friend, put on your Hat; be cover'd.

Beau. Sir, will you please to sit down on this Bank?

Sir D. No, no, there's no need, no need; for all I have a young Wife, I can stand upon my Legs, Sweet-heart.

Beau. Sir, I beseech you.

Sir D. By no means; I think, Friend, we had some hard Words just now, 'twas about a paltry Baggage, but she's a pretty Baggage, and a witty Baggage, and a Baggage that ——

Beau. Sir, I am heartily asham'd of all Misdemeanor on my Side.

Sir D. You do well . . . here, here, do you see this! here's the Ring you sent a roguing; Sir, do you think my Wife wants anything that you can help her to?—Why, I'll warrant you this Ring cost fifty Pounds; what a Prodigal Fellow are you to throw away so much Money; or didst thou steal it, old Boy? I believe thou may'st be poor,

I'll lend thee Money upon 't, if thou think'st fit, at thirty in the hundred, because I love thee, ha, ha, ha.

Beau. Sir, your humble Servant, I am sorry 'twas not worth your Lady's Acceptance. Now what a Dog am I!

Sir D. I should have given it thee before, but faith I forgot it, tho' it was not my Wife's Fault in the least; for she says, as thou likest this Usage, she hopes to have thy Custom again, Child; ha, ha, ha.

Beau. Then Sir, I beseech you tell her, that you have made a Convert of me, and that I am so sensible of my insolent Behaviour towards her ——

Sir D. Very well, I shall do it.

Beau. That 'tis impossible I shall ever be at peace with myself, till I find some way how to make her Reparation.

Sir D. Very good, ha, ha, ha.

Beau. And that if ever she find me guilty of the like Offence again ——

Sir D. No, Sir, you had not best; but proceed, ha, ha, ha.

Beau. Let her banish all good Opinion of me for ever.

Sir D. No more to be said, your Servant, good b'w'y.

Beau. One Word more, I beseech you, Sir Davy.

Sir D. What's that?

Beau. I beg you tell her that the generous Reproof she has given me has so wrought upon me ——

Sir D. Well, I will.

Beau. That I esteem this Jewel not only as a Wreck redeem'd from my Folly, but that for her sake I will preserve it to the utmost Moment of my Life.

Sir D. With all my Heart, I vow and swear.

Beau. And that I long to convince her I am not the Brute she might mistake me for.

Sir D. Right; well, this will make the purest sport. [*Aside*] Let me see; first you acknowledge yourself to be a very impudent Fellow.

Beau. I do so, Sir.

Sir D. And that you shall never be at rest, till you have satisfy'd my Lady.

Beau. Right, Sir.

Sir D. Satisfy'd her! very good, ha, ha, ha, and that you will never play the Fool any more. Be sure you keep your word, Friend.

Beau. Never, Sir.

Sir D. And that you will keep that Ring for her sake, as long as you live, ha!—

Beau. To the Day of my Death, I'll assure you.

Sir D. I protest that will be very kindly done—and that you long mightily, long to let her understand that you are another—guess Fellow than she may take you for.

Beau. Exactly Sir, that is the Sum and End of my Desires.

Sir D. Well I'll take care of your Business, I'll do your Business, I'll warrant you; this will be the purest sport when I come home! [*Aside.*] Well, your Servant, remember, be sure you remember: Your Servant. [*Exit.*]

Beau. So, now I find a Husband is a delicate Instrument rightly made use of . . .

U, Page 38.

Whilst in *The School for Husbands* (Act ii., Scene 9) Valère pretends to acquiesce in what Sganarelle says, and even declares he will abandon the pursuit of Isabella, Valerio, in *The Damoiselles à la Mode*, threatens Sganarelle, and states he'd better make his will before he marries. But in both plays Sganarelle is the go-between of Isabella and her lover. The following scene from Flecknoe's play (Act iv., Scene 10) is an imitation of the one of *The School for Husbands* (Act ii., Scene 14), in which Valerio and Isabella are brought together by Sganarelle.

VALERIO, ERGASTO; *enter to them* SGANARELLE *and* ISABELLA.

Isabella. Now, what is't you'l shew me?

Sganarelle. That which you'l wonder to see I'm sure.

Isa. Some fine sight I'le warrant you.

Sgan. Look! d'ye see who's yonder!

Isa. Ha! Valerio!

Sgan. I knew you'd wonder to see him here.

Isa. Help me dissimulation, or else I shall betray my joy to see him. [*Aside.*] And was't you that brought him hither?

Sgan. Who else dost think?

Isa. Y've done very well, and I'm much beholding t'ye, to bring such Gallants as these unto your house; I wonder what you mean by it!

Sgan. Nay, be not angry now,——I only brought him to hear confirmed by you what I have told him from you; as first, that you observed well enough how he follow'd you, and the amorous glances he gave you too.

Isa. All this I bid him tell you.

Sgan. Go too, then, these are Truths I hope—and you wou'd not believe me now;—then for the Letter——

Isa. I confess I sent that too.

Sgan. Go too, then, these are truths, I hope still,—and did you not bid me tell him you were inform'd he intended a terrible Ryot in my house, and to come to-night and take you away by force?

Isa. I did so.

Sgan. Very good still; all these are truths, I hope.

Isa. And that if you made not an end the sooner, you'd put me to terrible straits and plunges, and make me take some desperate resolution.

Val. And this he told me too.

Sgan. Very good then, all these are truths, I hope still.

Isa. And are you not asham'd all this being so, that I woman shu'd send unto ye so oft, and you a man shu'd never answer me ; or only by words, not by effects and deeds :—Was this done like a Gentleman ?

Sgan. Well said. I told you she wou'd chide you ; but thou dost not chide him enough.

Val. I confess your Reproaches are just, but I beseech you to consider all the difficulties I had, and believe that I'm more unfortunate then criminal.

Isa. Well, then, for your greater satisfaction (if yet you be not satisfied), know there stands a couple of you, of which the one I love, the other hate as much.

Sgan. Mark that now.

Isa. The one is all my pleasure and delight, t'other all my pain and torment.

Sgan. Mark that agen.

Isa. T' one, finally, I'd have for Husband rather than my life,
T' other I'd sooner die—then be his wife.

[*To Sganarelle.*] Does this content you now ?

Sgan. I, child of mine own Education, it does ; and in sign of it—there kiss my hand.

Erg. A special favour.

Isa. Well, now if you be satisfied, will you get you gone ?

Val. Yes, Lady, I go ; and since I well perceive who 'tis you love, and who you hate so much, I shall soon rid you of his hateful sight.

Isa. Pray do, then, and know in any one action you can't oblige me more ; for I confess I'd rather see a Basilisk.

Sgan. Aye, say not so.

Isa. Why ?

Sgan. Thou'lt kill him quite, dost not see how sad he is already ;—poor man ! I pity him, but I cannot cry.

Isa. Nor shall you laugh long, I hope. [*Aside.*

Sgan. What, are you here still ? I thought you had been gone with a nose thus long at least ;—now I'm on mine own dunghill, I may crow over him.

Val. 'Tis well, Sir, you'r a happy man that may tarry here whilst I must part from hence ; yet shall I never repent my love to her, nor envy her's to you.

Sgan. Do what you will, so you get you gone, for you know she can't endure to see your face, wherefore I pray try a little how she'l endure to see your back.

Erg. How I cou'd beat the Rogue !

Val. Come, come, let's go, and never mind him.

Sgan. So, so, 'tis very well. Oh, what a comfortable sight it is ! Yet a little more——. So now, 't is well. [*Exeunt Valerio and Ergasto.*

V, Page 40.

This scene from Murphy's *School for Guardians* (Act iii. Scene 2) is a free imitation of the scene between Isabella, Sganarelle, and Valère in Molière's *School for Husbands* (Act ii., Scene 14). For the nonce, the maiden's name is Mary-Ann, the lover, Brumpton, and the old jealous man, Oldcastle.

MARY-ANN, OLDCASTLE, BRUMPTON.

Mary-Ann. By goles this is pure. I saw him at the window; he is bringing him to see me. I have writ another letter since he has taught me that trick himself; and now I 'll give it him if I can.

Oldcastle. Mary-Ann, I have brought this gentleman with me. He comes to ask your pardon, and to tell you that he was going to be the ruin of you. Tell it to her yourself, Mr Brumpton.

Mary-A. I am sure I forgive him with all my heart, so I do.

Old. Speak to her, Mr Brumpton, speak to her.

Brumpton. Madam, I did not know what liberties I was taking with my friend.

Old. You had a mind to ruin her, say so without mincing it.

Brum. I must now renounce all farther pretensions; since to adore you any longer would be a violation of friendship, and an injury to this worthy gentleman, who has been an intimate with my father for fifty years.

Old. You may pass that by.

Brum. So that I most humbly beg your pardon.

Old. Go on, go on. [*He is seized with a fit of coughing.*

Brum. [*While Oldcastle coughs*] And though I shall never efface your loved idea from my mind— [*He kisses his hand to her.*

Mary-A. You have my pardon: I told you so already. [*She smiles.*

Old. Oh! Lord! Lord! [*Recovering himself*] Well, have you told her you have done with her for ever?

Brum. Yes, I have got so far.

Old. Very well! Now, Mary-Ann, on your part, let him know your mind.

Mary-A. Must I say all out of my own head?

Old. Ay! ay! tell him all. I wish brother Lovibond was witness to this! [*Aside.*

Mary-A. I am glad you came to speak to me, Sir, and I understand you very well. [*Smiles to him.*

Old. But a little more at large: tell him whom you chuse for a husband.

Mary-A. Why, here are two lovers, for whom I have very different sentiments. I love one of them,—[*frowning at Oldcastle*] and [*smiling at Brumpton*] I hate the other. The company of one is always agreeable, [*to Oldcastle sullenly*] and [*smiling at Brumpton*] I don't care if I

never see the other's face. I should like so be married to one of them, [*to Oldcastle*] and [*smiling at Brumpton*] I had as soon be gibbeted as be married to the other. But my own Mr Oldcastle—[*toys and plays with him, then turning to Brumpton*] I love you of all things.

Old. You have won my heart.

Mary-A. But do you forgive me everything now? Ah! you don't love me. [*Sings* "Go Naughty Man," *and reaches a letter to Brumpton.*]

Old. I do; in troth I do. Mr Brumpton, you see I have not suggested a word: all the dictates of her own heart.

Mary-A. [*Smiling to Brumpton*] All from the very bottom of my heart!

Brum. Since I understand you, Ma'am, I shall remove the hated object from your sight.

Mary-A. The sooner the better. [*Then turns and plays with Oldcastle.*

Brum. Mr Oldcastle, I have the honour, Sir, to wish you all happiness. I fly this moment to put your commands into execution, Ma'am. [*Going.*

Mary-A. You can't go about it too fast.

Brum. You may rely upon my honour.

Mary-A. And don't let me be unhappy any more.

Brum. You may depend upon me.

Old. So, so; now I'll attend you down stairs, Po.! no ceremony. You have made me happy, Mr Brumpton. You have made Mary-Ann happy. Come, I'll let you out, Mr Brumpton. [*Exit.*

Brum. [*Kissing his hand to Mary-Ann*] I attend you, Sir.

Mary-A. By goles, he has taught me a little wit himself; and if Mr Brumpton follows my directions, I shall be pure and happy at last.

W, Page 41.

In Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (Act v. Scene 1) Mrs Pinchwife (Isabella) pretends that she has written a letter for her sister, who is in love with Horner. It is her husband himself who takes her to her lover. The whole scene is an imitation of Molière's Second Scene of the Third Act of *The School for Husbands.* Sganarelle is called Pinchwife in the English play:—

Pinchwife. . . . Hark you, madam, your sister went out in the morning, and I have not seen her within since.

Mrs Pinchwife. Alack-a-day, she has been crying all day above, it seems, in a corner.

Pinch. Where is she? let me speak with her.

Mrs P. [*Aside*] Oh Lord, then she 'll discover all.—(*Aloud*) Pray hold, bud; what, d' ye mean to discover me? she 'll know I have told you then. Pray, bud, let me talk with her first.

Pinch. I must speak with her, to know whether Horner ever made her any promise . . .

Mrs P. Pray, dear bud, don't, till I have spoken with her, and told her that I have told you all; for she 'll kill me else.

Pinch. Go then, and bid her come out to me.

Mrs P. Yes, yes, bud.

Pinch. Let me see—— [*Pausing.*

Mrs P. [*Aside*] I'll go, but she is not within to come to him: I have just time to know of Lucy her maid, who first set me on work, what lie I shall tell next; for I am e'en at my wit's end. [*Exit*] . . . [*Re-enter Mrs Pinchwife*] O Lord, bud! I told you what anger you would make with my sister.

Pinch. Won't she come hither?

Mrs P. No, no. Lack-a-day, she 's ashamed to look you in the face; and she says, if you go in to her, she 'll run away down stairs, and shamefully go herself to Mr Horner, who has promised her marriage, she says; and she will have no other, so she won't.

Pinch. Did he so?—promise her marriage!—then she shall have no other. Go tell her so; and if she will come and discourse with me a little concerning the means, I will about it immediately. Go—[*Exit*] . . . [*Re-enter Mrs Pinchwife*] Well, what says she now?

Mrs P. Why, she says, she would only have you lead her to Horner's lodgings; with whom she first will discourse the matter before she talks with you, which yet she cannot do; for alack, poor creature, she says she can't so much as look you in the face, therefore she 'll come to you in a mask. And you must excuse her, if she make you no answer to any question of yours, till you have brought her to Mr Horner; and if you will not chide her, nor question her, she 'll come out to you immediately.

Pinch. Let her come: I will not speak a word to her, nor require a word from her.

Mrs P. Oh, I forgot: besides, she says, she cannot look you in the face, though through a mask; therefore would desire you to put out the candle.

Pinch. I agree to all. Let her make haste—there, 'tis out [*Puts out the candle. Exit Mrs Pinchwife.*] My case is something better. . . . . [*Re-enter Mrs Pinchwife masked, and in hoods and scarfs, and a night-gown and petticoat of Alithea's.*] What, are you come, sister? Let us go then.—But first, let me lock up my wife. Mrs Margery, where are you?

Mrs Pinch. Here, bud.

Pinch. Come hither, that I may lock you up: get you in.—[*Locks the door.*] Come sister, where are you now? [*Mrs Pinchwife gives him her hand; but when he lets her go, she steals softly on th' other side of him, and is led away by him for his sister Alithea.*]

X., Page 51.

Both in Flecknoe's and Molière's play, Isabella leaves the house, pretending in the English comedy that it is her cousin who has used her name, and is in love with Valerio, and in *The School for Husbands*, that it is her sister. The discovery in *The Damoiselles à la Mode* (Act v., Scene 7) is as follows :

SGANARELLE, BONHOMME (ARISTE), VALERIO, ISABELLA *Vail'd.*

Valerio. Who knocks there?

Sganarelle. None but friends ;—look there, d'ye see her now?

Bonhomme. Why this is Isabella.

Sgan. Ha, ha, ha ! he's deceived as well as t' other there,—conceal yourself still, and I'le keep your council. [*To Isabella*] Since he'l needs be deceiv'd, you shall see how finely I'le deceive him. Well, are you contented who e're it be, that he shu'd marry her?

Bon. I am, with all my heart ; and are you so too?

Sgan. With all my heart too ; there's my hand on't.

Isabella. Why then I thank you, Sir. [*Unvails.*]

Sgan. How ! Isabella !

Isa. Yes, Sir.

Bon. Did I not tell you so ?

Sgan. Poor Sganarelle ! how art thou coz'ned then?

Bon. And now I hope you see the difference betwixt our two procedures, yours by way of rigor and severity, and mine by mildness and gentleness?

Sgan. Now were I a Poet, what Lampoons cou'd I make against all womankind . . .

Isa. Then Sir, to you, I've nothing else to say, but only to thank you for the care y'ave had of my good breeding and education.

Sgan. And is this the fruit of it?

Isa. Even such as it deserves, and when I have any slaves to breed hereafter, I'le commend them to your care.

LES FÂCHEUX.

COMÉDIE.

THE BORES.

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS.

(THE ORIGINAL IN VERSE.)

AUGUST 17TH, 1661.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

The Bores is a character-comedy; but the peculiarities taken as the text of the play, instead of being confined to one or two of the leading personages, are exhibited in different forms by a succession of characters, introduced one after the other in rapid course, and disappearing after the brief performance of their rôles. We do not find an evolution of natural situations, proceeding from the harmonious conduct of two or three individuals, but rather a disjointed series of tableaux—little more than a collection of monologues strung together on a weak thread of explanatory comments, enunciated by an unwilling listener.

The method is less artistic, if not less natural; less productive of situations, if capable of greater variety of illustration. The circumstances under which Molière undertook to compose the play explain his resort to the weaker manner of analysis. The Superintendant-General of finance,[1] Nicolas Fouquet, desiring to entertain the King, Queen, and court at his mansion of Vaux-le-Vicomte, asked for a comedy at the hands of the Palais-Royal company, who had discovered the secret of pleasing the Grand Monarque. Molière had but a fortnight's notice; and he was expected, moreover, to accommodate his muse to various prescribed styles of entertainment.

Fouquet wanted a cue for a dance by Beauchamp, for a picture by Lebrun, for stage devices by Torelli. Molière was equal to the emergency. Never, perhaps, was a literary work written to order so worthy of being preserved for future generations. Not only were the intermediate ballets made sufficiently elastic to give scope for the ingenuity of the poet's auxiliaries, but the written scenes themselves were admirably contrived to display all the varied talent of his troupe.

The success of the piece on its first representation, which took place on the 17th of August 1661, was unequivocal; and the king summoned the author before him in order personally to express his satisfaction. It is related that, the Marquis de Soyecourt passing by at the time, the King said to Molière, "There is an original character which you have

[1] In Sir James Stephen's *Lectures on the History of France*, vol. ii. page 22, I find: "Still further to centralise the fiscal economy of France, Philippe le Bel created a new ministry. At the head of it he placed an officer of high rank, entitled the Superintendant-General of Finance, and, in subordination to him, he appointed other officers designated as Treasurers."

not yet copied." The suggestion was enough. The result was that, at the next representation, Dorante the hunter, a new bore, took his place in the comedy.

Louis XIV. thought he had discovered in Molière a convenient mouthpiece for his dislikes. The selfish king was no lover of the nobility, and was short-sighted enough not to perceive that the author's attacks on the nobles paved the way for doubts on the divine right of kings themselves. Hence he protected Molière, and entrusted to him the care of writing plays for his entertainments; the public did not, however, see *The Bores* until the 4th of November of the same year; and then it met with great success.

The bore is ubiquitous, on the stage as in everyday life. Horace painted him in his famous passage commencing *Ibam forte via Sacrâ*, and the French satirist, Regnier, has depicted him in his eighth satire.

Molière had no doubt seen the Italian farce, "*Le Case svaliggiate ovvero gli Interrompimenti di Pantalone*," which appears to have directly provided him with the thread of his comedy. This is the gist of it. A girl, courted by Pantaloon, gives him a rendezvous in order to escape from his importunities; whilst a cunning knave sends across his path a medley of persons to delay his approach, and cause him to break his appointment. This delay, however, is about the only point of resemblance between the Italian play and the French comedy.

There are some passages in Scarron's *Epîtres chagrines*, addressed to the Marshal d'Albret and M. d'Elbène, from which our author must have derived a certain amount of inspiration; for in these epistles the writer reviews the whole tribe of bores, in coarse but vigorous language.

Molière dedicated *The Bores* to Louis XIV. in the following words:

SIRE,

I am adding one scene to the Comedy, and a man who dedicates a book is a species of Bore insupportable enough. Your Majesty is better acquainted with this, than any person in the kingdom; and this is not the first time You have been exposed to the fury of Epistles Dedicatory. But though I follow the example of others, and put myself in the rank of those I have ridiculed; I dare however assure Your Majesty, that what I have done in this case, is not so much to present You a book, as to have the opportunity of returning You thanks for the success of this Comedy. I owe, Sire, that success, which exceeded my expectations, not only to the glorious approbation with which Your Majesty honoured this piece at first, and which attracted so powerfully that of all the world; but also to the order, which You gave me, to add a *Bore*, of which Yourself had the goodness to give me the idea, and which was proved by every one to be the finest part of the work.[2] I must confess, Sire, I never did any thing with such ease and readiness, as that part, where I had Your Majesty's commands to work.

The pleasure I had in obeying them, was to me more than *Apollo* and all the *Muses*; and by this I conceive what I should be able to execute in a complete Comedy, were I inspired by the same commands. Those who are born in an

[2] See page 85; see also Vol. I., Prefatory Memoir, page xxvii.

elevated rank, may propose to themselves the honour of serving Your Majesty in great Employments; but, for my part, all the glory I can aspire to, is to amuse You.[3] The ambition of my wishes is confined to this; and I think that, to contribute any thing to the diversion of her King, is, in some respects, not to be useless to France. Should I not succeed in this, it shall never be through want of zeal, or study; but only through a hapless destiny, which often accompanies the best intentions, and which, to a certainty, would be a most sensible affliction to SIRE, *Your* MAJESTY'S *most humble, most obedient, and most faithful Servant,*

MOLIERE.

In the eighth volume of the "Select Comedies of M. de Molière, London, 1732," the play of *The Bores* is dedicated, under the name of *The Impertinents*, to the Right Honourable the Lord Carteret,[4] in the following words:

MY LORD,

It is by Custom grown into a sort of Privilege for Writers, of whatsoever Class, to attack Persons of Rank and Merit by these kind of Addresses. We conceive a certain Charm in Great and Favourite Names, which sooths our Reader, and prepossesses him in our Favour; We deem ourselves of Consequence, according to the Distinction of our Patron; and come in for our Share in the Reputation he bears in the World. Hence it is, MY LORD, that Persons of the greatest Worth are most expos'd to these Insults.

For however usual and convenient this may be to a Writer, it must be confess'd, MY LORD, it may be some Degree of Persecution to a *Patron;* Dedicators, as *Moliere* observes, being a Species of *Impertinents*, troublesome enough. Yet the Translator of this Piece hopes he may be rank'd among the more tolerable ones, in presuming to inscribe to Your LORDSHIP, the *Fâcheux* of *Moliere* done into *English;* assuring himself that Your LORDSHIP will not think any thing this Author has writ, unworthy of your Patronage; nor discourage even a weaker Attempt to make him more generally read and understood.

Your LORDSHIP is well known, as an absolute Master, and generous Patron of Polite Letters; of those Works especially which discover a Moral, as well as Genius; and by a delicate Raillery laugh men out of their Follies and Vices: could the Translator, therefore, of this Piece come anything near the Original, it were sure of your Acceptance. He will not dare to arrogate any thing to himself

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[3] In spite of all that has been said about Molière's passionate fondness for his profession, I imagine he must now and then have felt some slight, or suffered from some want of consideration. Hence perhaps the above sentence. Compare with this Shakespeare's hundred and eleventh sonnet:

"Oh! for my sake, do you with Fortune chide
The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,
That did not better for my life provide
Than public means which public manners breeds.
Thence comes it that my name receives a brand;
And almost thence my nature is subdu'd
To what it works in, like the dyer's hand."

[4] John, Lord Carteret, born 22d April 1690, twice Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, was Secretary of State and head of the Ministry from February 1742 until November 23, 1744, became Earl Granville that same year, on the death of his mother; was President of the Council in 1751, and died in 1763.

on this Head, before so good a Judge as Your LORDSHIP: He hopes, however, it will appear that, where he seems too superstitious a Follower of his Author, 'twas not because he could not have taken more Latitude, and have given more Spirit; but to answer what he thinks the most essential Part of a Translator, to lead the less-knowing to the Letter; and after better Acquaintance, Genius will bring them to the Spirit.

The Translator knows your LORDSHIP, and Himself too well, to attempt Your Character, even though he should think this a proper occasion: The Scholar—the Genius—the Statesman—the Patriot—the Man of Honour and Humanity.—— Were a Piece finish'd from these Out-lines, the whole World would agree in giving it Your LORDSHIP.

But that requires a Hand——The Person, who presents This, thinks it sufficient to be indulg'd the Honour of subscribing himself

My LORD, *Your Lordship's most devoted, most obedient, humble servant,*

THE TRANSLATOR.

Thomas Shadwell, whom Dryden flagellates in his *Mac-Flecknoe*, and in the second part of *Absalom and Achitophel*, and whom Pope mentions in his *Dunciad*, wrote *The Sullen Lovers, or the Impertinents*, which was first performed in 1668 at the Duke of York's Theatre, by their Majesties' Servants. This play is a working up of *The Bores* and *The Misanthrope*, with two scenes from *The Forced Marriage*, and a reminiscence from *The Love-Tiff*. It is dedicated to the "Thrice Noble, High and Puissant Prince William, Duke, Marquis, and Earl of Newcastle," because all Men, who pretend either to Sword or Pen, ought "to shelter themselves under Your Grace's Protection." Another reason Shadwell gives for this dedication is in order "to rescue this (play) from the bloody Hands of the Criticks, who will not dare to use it roughly, when they see Your Grace's Name in the beginning." He also states, that "the first Hint I received was from the Report of a Play of Molière's of three Acts, called *Les Fascheux*, upon which I wrote a great part of this before I read that." He borrowed, after reading it, the first scene in the second act, and Molière's story of Piquet, which he translated into Backgammon, and says, "that he who makes a common practice of stealing other men's wit, would, if he could with the same safety, steal anything else." Shadwell mentions, however, nothing of his borrowing from *The Misanthrope* and *The Forced Marriage*. This preface was, besides political differences, the chief cause of the quarrel between Shadwell and Dryden; for in it the former defends Ben Jonson against the latter, and mentions that—"I have known some of late so insolent to say that Ben Jonson wrote his best playes without wit, imagining that all the wit playes consisted in bringing two persons upon the stage to break jest, and to bob one another, which they call repartie." The original edition of *The Sullen Lovers* is partly in blank verse; but, in the first collected edition of Shadwell's works, published by his son in 1720, it is printed in prose. Stanford, "a morose, melancholy man, tormented beyond measure with the impertinence of people, and resolved to leave the world to be quit of them," is a combination of Alceste in *The Misanthrope*, and Éraste in *The Bores;* Lovel, "an airy

young gentleman, friend to Stanford, one that is pleased with, and laughs at, the impertinents; and that which is the other's torment, is his recreation," is Philinte of *The Misanthrope;* Emilia and Carolina appear to be Célimène and Eliante; whilst Lady Vaine is an exaggerated Arsinoé of the same play. Sir Positive At-all, "a foolish knight that pretends to understand everything in the world, and will suffer no man to understand anything in his Company, so foolishly positive, that he will never be convinced of an error, though never so gross," is a very good character, and an epitome of all the Bores into one.

The prologue of *The Sullen Lovers* begins thus :—

> "How popular are Poets now-a-days!
> Who can more Men at their first summons raise,
> Than many a wealthy home-bred Gentleman,
> By all his Interest in his Country can.
> They raise their Friends; but in one Day arise
> 'Gainst one poor Poet all these Enemies."

Everything Shadwell has borrowed will be given in the Appendices of the different plays.

PREFACE.

NEVER was any Dramatic performance so hurried as this; and it is a thing, I believe, quite new, to have a Comedy planned, finished, got up, and played in a fortnight. I do not say this to boast of an *impromptu*, or to pretend to any reputation on that account: but only to prevent certain people, who might object that I have not introduced here all the species of Bores who are to be found. I know that the number of them is great, both at the Court and in the City, and that, without episodes, I might have composed a comedy of five acts and still have had matter to spare. But in the little time allowed me, it was impossible to execute any great design, or to study much the choice of my characters, or the disposition of my subject. I therefore confined myself to touching only upon a small number of Bores; and I took those which first presented themselves to my mind, and which I thought the best fitted for amusing the august personages before whom this play was to appear; and, to unite all these things together speedily, I made use of the first plot I could find. It is not, at present, my intention to examine whether the whole might not have been better, and whether all those who were diverted with it laughed according to rule. The time may come when I may print my remarks upon the pieces I have written: and I do not despair letting the world see that, like a grand author, I can quote Aristotle and Horace. In expectation of this examination, which perhaps may never take place, I leave the decision of this affair to the multitude, and I look upon it as equally difficult to oppose a work which the public approves, as it is to defend one which it condemns.

There is no one who does not know for what time of rejoicing the piece was composed; and that *fête* made so much noise, that it is not necessary to speak of it[5] but it will not be amiss to say

[5] *The Bores*, according to the Preface, planned, finished, got up, and played in a fortnight, was acted amidst other festivities, first at Vaux, the seat of Monsieur Fouquet, Superintendant of Finances, the 17th of August, 1661, in the presence of the King and the whole Court, with the

a word or two of the ornaments which have been mixed with the Comedy.

The design was also to give a ballet; and as there was only a small number of first-rate dancers, it was necessary to separate the *entrées*[6] of this ballet, and to interpolate them with the Acts of the Play, so that these intervals might give time to the same dancers to appear in different dresses; also to avoid breaking the thread of the piece by these interludes, it was deemed advisable to weave the ballet in the best manner one could into the subject, and make but one thing of it and the play. But, as the time was exceedingly short, and the whole was not entirely regulated by the same person; there may be found, perhaps, some parts of the ballet which do not enter so naturally into the play as others do. But that as it may, this is a medley new upon our stage; although one might find some authorities in antiquity: but as every one thought it agreeable, it may serve as a specimen for other things which may be concerted more at leisure.

Immediately upon the curtain rising, one of the actors, whom you may suppose to be myself, appeared on the stage in an ordinary dress, and addressing himself to the King, with the look of a man surprised, made excuses in great disorder, for being there alone, and wanting both time and actors to give his Majesty the diversion he seemed to expect; at the same time in the midst of twenty natural cascades, a large shell was disclosed, which every one saw: and the agreeable Naiad who appeared in it, advanced to the front of the stage, and with an heroic air pronounced the following verses which Mr Pellisson had made, and which served as a Prologue.

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exception of the Queen. Three weeks later Fouquet was arrested, and in condemned to be shut up in a prison, where he died in 1672. It was not till November 1661 that *The Bores* was played in Paris.

6 See Vol. I. Prefatory Memoir, page xxix., note 13.

PROLOGUE.

[*The Theatre represents a garden adorned with Termini and several fountains. A Naiad coming out of the water in a shell.*]

Mortals, from Grots profound I visit you,
Gallia's great Monarch in these Scenes to view;
Shall Earth's wide Circuit, or the wider Seas,
Produce some Novel Sight your Prince to please;
Speak He, or wish: to him nought can be hard,
Whom as a living Miracle you all regard.
Fertile in Miracles, his Reign demands
Wonders at universal Nature's Hands,
Sage, young, victorious, valiant, and august,
Mild as severe, and pow'rful as he's just,
His Passions, and his Foes alike to foil,
And noblest Pleasures join to noblest Toil;
His righteous Projects ne'er to misapply,
Hear and see all, and act incessantly:
He who can this, can all; he needs but dare,
And Heaven in nothing will refuse his Prayer.
Let Lewis but command, these Bounds shall move,
And Trees grow vocal as Dodona's Grove.
Ye Nymphs and Demi-Gods, whose Presence fills
Their sacred Trunks, come forth; so Lewis wills;
To please him be our Task; I lead the way,
Quit now your ancient Forms but for a Day,
With borrow'd Shape cheat the Spectator's Eye,
And to Theatric Art yourselves apply.

[*Several Dryads, accompanied by Fawns and Satyrs, come forth out of the Trees and Termini.*]

Hence Royal Cares, hence anxious Application,
(His fav'rite Work) to bless a happy Nation:
His lofty Mind permit him to unbend,
And to a short Diversion condescend;
The Morn shall see him with redoubled Force,
Resume the Burthen and pursue his Course,
Give Force to Laws, his Royal Bounties share,
Wisely prevent our Wishes with his Care.
Contending Lands to Union firm dispose,
And lose his own, to fix the World's Repose.
But now, let all conspire to ease the Pressure
Of Royalty, by Elegance of Pleasure.
Impertinents, avant; nor come in sight,
Unless to give him more supreme Delight.[7]

[*The Naiad brings with her, for the Play, one part of the Persons she has summoned to appear, whilst the rest begin a Dance to the Sound of Hautboys, accompanied by Violins.*]

[7] The Naiad was represented by Madeleine Béjart, even then good-looking, though she was more than forty years old. The verses are taken from the eighth volume of the "Select Comedies of M. de Moliere in French and English. London, 1732," and as fulsome as they well can be. The English translation, which is not mine, fairly represents the official nonsense of the original.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ERASTE, *in love with Orphise.*

DAMIS, *guardian to Orphise.*

ALCIDOR,
LISANDRE,
ALCANDRE,
ALCIPPE,
} *bores.* {
DORANTE,
CARITIDÈS,[7]
ORMIN,
FILINTE,

LA MONTAGNE, *servant to Éraste.*

L'ÉPINE, *servant to Damis.*

LA RIVIÈRE *and* TWO COMRADES.

ORPHISE, *in love with Éraste.*

ORANTE,
CLIMÈNE.
} *female bores.*

Scene—PARIS.

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[8] Molière himself played probably the parts of Lisandre the dancer, Alcandre the duellist, or Alcippe the gambler, and perhaps all three, with some slight changes in the dress. He also acted Caritidès the pedant, and Dorante the lover of the chase. In the inventory taken after Molière's death we find: "A dress for the Marquis of the *Fâcheux*, consisting in a pair of breeches very large, and fastened below with ribbands, (*rhingrave*) made of common silk, blue and gold-coloured stripes, with plenty of flesh-coloured and yellow trimmings, with Colbertine, a doublet of Colbertine cloth, trimmed with flame-coloured ribbands, silk stockings and garters." The dress of Caritides in the same play, "cloak and breeches of cloth, with picked trimmings, and a slashed doublet." Dorante's dress was probably "a hunting-coat, sword and belt; the above-mentioned hunting-coat ornamented with fine silver lace, also a pair of stag-hunting gloves, and a pair of long stockings (*bas à botter*) of yellow cloth." The original inventory, given by M. Soulié, has *toile Colbertine*, for "Colbertine cloth." I found this word in Webster's Dictionary described from *The Fop's Dictionary of* 1690 as "A lace resembling net-work, the fabric of Mons. Colbert, superintendent of the French king's manufactures." In Congreve's *The Way of the World*, Lady Wishfort, quarrelling with her woman Foible (Act v., Scene 1), says to her, amongst other insults: "Go, hang out an old Frisoneer gorget, with a yard of yellow colberteen again!"

THE BORES.

(*LES FÂCHEUX.*)

ACT I. SCENE I

ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE.[9]

Er. Good Heavens! under what star am I born, to be perpetually worried by bores? It seems that fate throws them in my way everywhere; each day I discover some new specimen. But there is nothing to equal my bore of to-day. I thought I should never get rid of him; a hundred times I cursed the harmless desire, which seized me at dinner time, to see the play, where, thinking to amuse myself, I unhappily was sorely punished for my sins. I must tell you how it happened, for I cannot yet think about it coolly. I was on the stage,[10] in a mood to listen to the piece which I had heard praised by so many. The actors began; everyone kept silence; when, with a good deal of noise and in a ridiculous manner, a man with large rolls[11] entered abruptly, crying out "Hulloa, there, a seat directly!" and, disturbing the audience with

[9] See Appendix, Note A.

[10] It was the custom for young men of fashion to seat themselves upon the stage (see Vol. I., Prefatory Memoir, page xxxiii., note 8). They often crowded it to such an extent, that it was difficult for the actors to move. This custom was abolished only in 1759, when the Count de Lauraguais paid the comedians a considerable sum of money, on the condition of not allowing any stranger upon the stage.

[11] See Vol. I., pages 232 and 240, notes 23 and 33.

his uproar, interrupted the play in its finest passage. Heavens! will Frenchmen, altho' so often corrected, never behave themselves like men of common-sense? Must we, in a public theatre, show ourselves with our worst faults, and so confirm, by our foolish outbursts, what our neighbours everywhere say of us? Thus I spoke; and whilst I was shrugging my shoulders, the actors attempted to continue their parts. But the man made a fresh disturbance in seating himself, and again crossing the stage with long strides, although he might have been quite comfortable at the wings, he planted his chair full in front, and, defying the audience by his broad back, hid the actors from three-fourths of the pit. A murmur arose, at which anyone else would have felt ashamed; but he, firm and resolute, took no notice of it, and would have remained just as he had placed himself, if, to my misfortune, he had not cast his eyes on me. "Ah, Marquis!" he said, taking a seat near me, "how dost thou do? Let me embrace thee." Immediately my face was covered with blushes that people should see I was acquainted with such a giddy fellow. I was but slightly known to him for all that: but so it is with these men, who assume an acquaintance on nothing, whose embraces we are obliged to endure when we meet them, and who are so familiar with us as to thou and thee us. He began by asking me a hundred frivolous questions, raising his voice higher than the actors. Every one was cursing him; and in order to check him I said, "I should like to listen to the play." "Hast thou not seen it, Marquis? Oh, on my soul, I think it very funny, and I am no fool in these matters. I know the canons of perfection, and Corneille reads to me all that he writes." Thereupon he gave me a summary of the piece, informing me scene after scene of what was about to happen; and when we came to any lines which he knew by heart, he recited them aloud

before the actor could say them. It was in vain for me to resist; he continued his recitations, and towards the end rose a good while before the rest. For these fashionable fellows, in order to behave gallantly, especially avoid listening to the conclusion. I thanked Heaven, and naturally thought that, with the comedy, my misery was ended. But as though this were too good to be expected, my gentleman fastened on me again, recounted his exploits, his uncommon virtues, spoke of his horses, of his love-affairs, of his influence at court, and heartily offered me his services. I politely bowed my thanks, all the time devising some way of escape. But he, seeing me eager to depart, said, "Let us leave; every one is gone." And when we were outside, he prevented my going away, by saying, "Marquis, let us go to the Cours[12] to show my carriage. It is very well built, and more than one Duke and Peer has ordered a similar one from my coach-maker." I thanked him, and the better to get off, told him that I was about to give a little entertainment. "Ah, on my life, I shall join it, as one of your friends, and give the go-by to the Marshal, to whom I was engaged." "My banquet," I said, "is too slight for gentlemen of your rank." "Nay," he replied, "I am a man of no ceremony, and I go simply to have a chat with thee; I vow, I am tired of grand entertainments." "But if you are expected, you will give offence, if you stay away." "Thou art joking, Marquis! We all know each other; I pass my time with thee much more pleasantly." I was chiding myself, sad and perplexed at heart at the unlucky result of my excuse, and knew not what to do next to get rid of such a mortal annoyance, when a splendidly built

[12] The *Cours* is that part of the Champs-Elysées called *le Cours-la-Reine*, because Maria de Medici, the wife of Henry IV., had trees planted there. As the theatre finished about seven o'clock in the evening, it was not too late to show a carriage.

coach, crowded with footmen before and behind, stopped in front of us with a great clatter; from which leaped forth a young man gorgeously dressed; and my bore and he, hastening to embrace each other, surprised the passers-by with their furious encounter. Whilst both were plunged in these fits of civilities, I quietly made my exit without a word; not before I had long groaned under such a martyrdom, cursing this bore whose obstinate persistence kept me from the appointment which had been made with me here.

La M. These annoyances are mingled with the pleasures of life. All goes not, sir, exactly as we wish it. Heaven wills that here below everyone should meet bores; without that, men would be too happy.

Er. But of all my bores the greatest is Damis, guardian of her whom I adore, who dashes every hope she raises, and has brought it to pass that she dares not see me in his presence. I fear I have already passed the hour agreed on; it is in this walk that Orphise promised to be.

La M. The time of an appointment has generally some latitude, and is not limited to a second.

Er. True; but I tremble; my great passion makes out of nothing a crime against her whom I love.

La M. If this perfect love, which you manifest so well, makes out of nothing a great crime against her whom you love; the pure flame which her heart feels for you on the other hand converts all your crimes into nothing.

Er. But, in good earnest, do you believe that I am loved by her?

La M. What! do you still doubt a love that has been tried?

Er. Ah, it is with difficulty that a heart that truly loves has complete confidence in such a matter. It fears to flatter itself; and, amidst its various cares, what it most

wishes is what it least believes. But let us endeavour to discover the delightful creature.

La M. Sir, your necktie is loosened in front.

Er. No matter.

La M. Let me adjust it, if you please.

Er. Ugh, you are choking me, blockhead; let it be as it is.

La M. Let me just comb . . .

Er. Was there ever such stupidity! You have almost taken off my ear with a tooth of the comb.[13]

La M. Your rolls . . .

Er. Leave them; you are too particular.

La M. They are quite rumpled.

Er. I wish them to be so.

La M. At least allow me, as a special favour, to brush your hat, which is covered with dust.

Er. Brush, then, since it must be so.

La M. Will you wear it like that?

Er. Good Heavens, make haste!

La M. It would be a shame.

Er. [*After waiting*] That is enough.

La M. Have a little patience.

Er. He will be the death of me!

La M. Where could you get all this dirt?

Er. Do you intend to keep that hat for ever?

La M. It is finished.

Er. Give it me, then.

La M. [*Letting the hat fall*] Ah!

Er. There it is on the ground. I am not much the better for all your brushing! Plague take you!

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[13] The servants had always a comb about them to arrange the wigs of their masters, whilst the latter thought it fashionable to comb and arrange their hair in public (see *The Pretentious Young Ladies*, Vol. I., page 232).

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La M. Let me give it a couple of rubs to take off . . .

Er. You shall not. The deuce take every servant who dogs your heels, who wearies his master, and does nothing but annoy him by wanting to set himself up as indispensable!

SCENE II.

ORPHISE, ALCIDOR, ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE.

[*Orphise passes at the foot of the stage; Alcidor holds her hand.*]

Er. But do I not see Orphise? Yes, it is she who comes. Whither goes she so fast, and what man is that who holds her hand? [*He bows to her as she passes, and she turns her head another way.*]

SCENE III.

ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE.

Er. What! She sees me here before her, and she passes by, pretending not to know me! What can I think? What do you say? Speak if you will.

La M. Sir, I say nothing, lest I bore you.

Er. And so indeed you do, if you say nothing to me whilst I suffer such a cruel martyrdom. Give me some answer; I am quite dejected. What am I to think? Say, what do you think of it? Tell me your opinion.

La M. Sir, I desire to hold my tongue, and not to set up for being indispensable.

Er. Hang the impertinent fellow! Go and follow them; see what becomes of them, and do not quit them.

La M. [*Returning*] Shall I follow at a distance?

Er. Yes.

La M. [*Returning*] Without their seeing me, or letting it appear that I was sent after them?

Er. No, you will do much better to let them know that you follow them by my express orders.

La M. [*Returning*] Shall I find you here?

Er. Plague take you. I declare you are the biggest bore in the world!

SCENE IV.

ÉRASTE, *alone.*

Ah, how anxious I feel; how I wish I had missed this fatal appointment! I thought I should find everything favourable; and, instead of that, my heart is tortured.

SCENE V.

LISANDRE, ÉRASTE.[14]

Lis. I recognised you under these trees from a distance, dear Marquis; and I came to you at once. As one of my friends, I must sing you a certain air which I have made for a little Couranto,[15] which pleases all the connoisseurs at court, and to which more than a score have already written words. I have wealth, birth, a tolerable employment, and am of some consequence in France; but I would not have failed, for all I am worth, to compose this air which I am going to let you hear. [*He tries his voice*] La, la; hum, hum; listen attentively, I beg. [*He sings an air of a Couranto*] Is it not fine?

Er. Ah!

Lis. This close is pretty. [*He sings the close over again four or five times successively*] How do you like it?

Er. Very fine, indeed.

[14] See Appendix, Note B. [15] See Vol. I., page 2

Lis. The steps which I have arranged are no less pleasing, and the figure in particular is wonderfully graceful. [*He sings the words, talks, and dances at the same time; and makes Éraste perform the lady's steps*] Stay, the gentleman crosses thus; then the lady crosses again: together: then they separate, and the lady comes there. Do you observe that little touch of a feint? This fleuret?[16] These coupés[17] running after the fair one. Back to back: face to face, pressing up close to her. [*After finishing*] What do you think of it, Marquis?

Er. All those steps are fine.

Lis. For my part, I would not give a fig for your ballet-masters.

Er. Evidently.

Lis. And the steps then?

Er. Are wonderful in every particular.

Lis. Shall I teach you them, for friendship's sake?

Er. To tell the truth, just now I am somewhat disturbed . . .

Lis. Well, then, it shall be when you please. If I had those new words about me, we would read them together, and see which were the prettiest..

Er. Another time.

Lis. Farewell. My dearest Baptiste[18] has not seen my Conranto; I am going to look for him. We always agree about the tunes; I shall ask him to score it.[19]

[*Exit, still singing.*

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[16] A fleuret was an old step in dancing formed of two half coupées and two steps on the point of the toes.

[17] A coupé is a movement in dancing, when one leg is a little bent, and om the ground, and with the other a motion is made forward.

[18] Baptiste Lulli had been appointed, in the month of May of ame year that *The Bores* was first played, *Surintendant et de la musique de la chambre du Roi.*

[19] endix, Note C.

SCENE VI.

ÉRASTE, *alone.*

Heavens! must we be compelled daily to endure a hundred fools, because they are men of rank, and must we, in our politeness, demean ourselves so often to applaud, when they annoy us?

SCENE VII.

ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE.

La M. Sir, Orphise is alone, and is coming this way.

Er. Ah, I feel myself greatly disturbed! I still love the cruel fair one, and my reason bids me hate her.

La M. Sir, your reason knows not what it would be at, nor yet what power a mistress has over a man's heart. Whatever just cause we may have to be angry with a fair lady, she can set many things to rights by a single word.

Er. Alas, I must confess it; the sight of her inspires me with respect instead of with anger.

SCENE VIII.

ORPHISE, ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE.

Orph. Your countenance seems to me anything but cheerful. Can it be my presence, Éraste, which annoys you? What is the matter? What is amiss? What makes you heave those sighs at my appearance?

Er. Alas! can you ask me, cruel one, what makes me so sad, and what will kill me? Is it not malicious to feign ignorance of what you have done to me? The gentleman whose conversation made you pass me just now . . . .

Orph. [*Laughing*] Does that disturb you?

Er. Do, cruel one, anew insult my misfortune. Certainly, it ill becomes you to jeer at my grief, and, by outrag-

ing my feelings, ungrateful woman, to take advantage of my weakness for you.

Orph. I really must laugh, and declare that you are very silly to trouble yourself thus. The man of whom you speak, far from being able to please me, is a bore of whom I have succeeded in ridding myself; one of those troublesome and officious fools who will not suffer a lady to be anywhere alone, but come up at once, with soft speech, offering you a hand, against which one rebels. I pretended to be going away, in order to hide my intention, and he gave me his hand as far as my coach. I soon got rid of him in that way, and returned by another gate to come to you.

Er. Orphise, can I believe what you say? And is your heart really true to me?

Orph. You are most kind to speak thus, when I justify myself against your frivolous complaints. I am still wonderfully simple, and my foolish kindness . . .

Er. Ah! too severe beauty, do not be angry. Being under your sway, I will implicitly believe whatever you are kind enough to tell me. Deceive your hapless lover if you will; I shall respect you to the last gasp. Abuse my love, refuse me yours, show me another lover triumphant; yes, I will endure everything for your divine charms. I shall die, but even then I will not complain.

Orph. As such sentiments rule your heart, I shall know, on my side . .

SCENE IX.

ALCANDRE, ORPHISE, ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE.

Alc. [*To Orphise*] Marquis, one word. Madame, I pray you to pardon me, if I am indiscreet in venturing, before you, to speak with him privately. [*Exit Orphise.*

SCENE X.

ALCANDRE, ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE.

Alc. I have a difficulty, Marquis, in making my request; but a fellow has just insulted me, and I earnestly wish, not to be behind-hand with him, that you would at once go and carry him a challenge from me. You know that in a like case I should joyfully repay you in the same coin.

Er. [*After a brief silence*] I have no desire to boast, but I was a soldier before I was a courtier. I served fourteen years, and I think I may fairly refrain from such a step with propriety, not fearing that the refusal of my sword can be imputed to cowardice. A duel puts one in an awkward light, and our King is not the mere shadow of a monarch. He knows how to make the highest in the state obey him, and I think that he acts like a wise Prince. When he needs my service, I have courage enough to perform it; but I have none to displease him. His commands are a supreme law to me; seek some one else to disobey him. I speak to you, Viscount, with entire frankness; in every other matter I am at your service. Farewell.[20]

SCENE XI.

ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE.

Er. To the deuce with these bores, fifty times over! Where, now, has my beloved gone to?

La M. I know not.

Er. Go and search everywhere till you find her. I shall await you in this walk.

[20] During his long reign, Louis XIV. tried to put a stop to duelling; and, though he did not wholly succeed, he prevented the seconds from participating in the fight,—a custom very general before his rule, and to which Eraste alludes in saying that he does not "fear that the refusal of his (my) sword can be imputed to cowardice."

Ballet to Act I.

First Entry.[21]

Players at Mall, crying out "Ware!" compel Éraste to draw back. After the players at Mall have finished, Éraste returns to wait for Orphise.

Second Entry.

Inquisitive folk advance, turning round him to see who he is, and cause him again to retire for a little while.

ACT II. SCENE I.

ÉRASTE, *alone.*

Are the bores gone at last? I think they rain here on every side. The more I flee from them, the more I light on them; and to add to my uneasiness, I cannot find her whom I wish to find. The thunder and rain have soon passed over, and have not dispersed the fashionable company. Would to Heaven that those gifts which it showered upon us, had

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[21] See Vol. I., page xxix, note 13. In John Crowne's *The Country Wit* (Act iv., Scene 2), there is an attempt at a play on the word "entry," which we give below:—

Lady Faddle. Nephew, thou wilt dance away all thy country flesh this winter; thy heels will be invited to their parts to dance in every "fine entry" in the masques and plays, and——

Sir Mannerly. Why, do they dance in entries here? We dance in the country in our halls and dining-rooms, because the entries are too narrow.

La. Fad. Oh fie, thou dost not understand the terms of thy own art yet! to dance in an entry, that is to say, in an entry, an entry of anything.

Sir Man. Of freestone or brick? . . .

La. Fad. No, no! fie, fie! expert in the science, and ignorant in the terms; in an entry of shepherds, or gods and goddesses.

Sir Man. I can dance in any entry in England.

La. Fad. Strange, that thou shouldst not apprehend me; but to let that pass——

driven away all the people who weary me! The sun sinks fast; I am surprised that my servant has not yet returned.

SCENE II.

ALCIPPE, ÉRASTE.[22]

Alc. Good day to you.

Er. [*Aside*] How now! Is my passion always to be turned aside!

Alc. Console me, Marquis, in respect of a wonderful game of piquet which I lost yesterday to a certain Saint-Bouvain, to whom I could have given fifteen points and the deal. It was a desperate blow, which has been too much for me since yesterday, and would make me wish all players at the deuce; a blow, I assure you, enough to make me hang myself in public.—I wanted only two tricks, whilst the other wanted a piquet. I dealt, he takes six, and asks for another deal. I, having a little of everything, refuse. I had the ace of clubs (fancy my bad luck!) the ace, king, knave, ten and eight of hearts, and as I wanted to make the point, threw away king and queen of diamonds, ten and queen of spades. I had five hearts in hand, and took up the queen, which just made me a high sequence of five. But my gentleman, to my extreme surprise, lays down on the table a sequence of six low diamonds, together with the ace. I had thrown away king and queen of the same colour. But, as he wanted a piquet, I got the better of my fear, and was confident at least of making two tricks. Besides the seven diamonds he had four spades, and played the smallest of them, put me in the predicament of not knowing which of my two aces to keep. I threw [redacted]

[22] See Appendix, Note D.

rightly as I thought, the ace of hearts; but he had discarded four clubs, and I found myself made *capot* by a six of hearts, unable, from sheer vexation, to say a single word.[23] By Heaven, account to me for this frightful piece of luck. Could it be credited, without having seen it?[24]

Er. It is in play that luck is mostly seen.

Alc. 'Sdeath, you shall judge for yourself if I am wrong, and if it is without cause that this accident enrages me. For here are our two hands, which I carry about me on purpose. Stay, here is my hand, as I told you; and here . . .

Er. I understood everything from your description, and admit that you have good cause to be enraged. But I

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[23] In the seventeenth century, piquet was not played with thirty-two, but with thirty-six cards; the sixes, which are now thrown away, remained then in the pack. Every player received twelve cards, and twelve remained on the table. He who had to play first could throw away seven or eight cards, the dealer four or five, and both might take fresh ones from those that were on the table. A trick counted only when taken with one of the court-cards, or a ten.

Saint-Bouvain, after having taken up his cards, had in hand six small diamonds from the ace with the ace, which counted 7, a sequence of six diamonds to the six to the knave counted 16, thus together 23, before he began counting. With his seven diamonds he made seven tricks, but only 26, counted 3, for those made by the ace, knave, and ten; this gave him a Besides his seven diamonds he had four spades, most likely the , king, knave, and a little one, and a six of hearts; though he made the tricks he only counted 3, which gave him 29. But as Alcippe not made a single trick, he was *capot*, which gave Saint-Bouvain this, with the 29 he made before, brought the total up to 69. As latter only wanted a *piquet*, that is 60,—which is when a player s thirty in the game, to which an additional thirty are then l, Saint-Bouvain won the game. Alcippe does not, however, what other cards he had in his hand at the moment the play besides the ace of clubs and a high sequence of five hearts, as s the eight of the same colour.

Compare with Molière's description of the game of piquet Pope's l history of the game of Ombre in the third Canto of *The Rape Lock.*

must leave you on certain business. Farewell. But take comfort in your misfortune.

Alc. Who; I? I shall always have that luck on my mind; it is worse than a thunderbolt to me. I mean to shew it to all the world. [*He retires, and on the point of returning, says meditatively*] A six of hearts! Two points.

Er. Where in the world are we? Go where we will, we see nothing but fools.

SCENE III.

ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE.[25]

Er. Hah! how long you have been, and how you have made me suffer.

La M. Sir, I could not make greater haste.

Er. But at length do you bring me some news?

La M. Doubtless; and by express command, from her you love, I have something to tell you.

Er. What? Already my heart yearns for the message. Speak!

La M. Do you wish to know what it is?

Er. Yes; speak quickly.

La M. Sir, pray wait. I have almost run myself out of breath.

Er. Do you find any pleasure in keeping me in suspense?

La M. Since you wish to know at once the orders which I have received from this charming person, I will tell you . . . Upon my word, without boasting of my zeal, I went a great way to find the lady; and if . . .

Er. Hang your digressions!

La M. Fie! you should somewhat moderate your passion; and Seneca . . .

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[25] See Appendix, Note E.

Er. Seneca is a fool in your mouth, since he tells me nothing of all that concerns me. Tell me your message at once.

La M. To satisfy you, Orphise. . . . An insect has got among your hair.

Er. Let it alone.

La M. This lovely one sends you word .

Er. What ?

La M. Guess.

Er. Are you aware that I am in no laughing mood ?

La M. Her message is, that you are to remain in this place, that in a short time you shall see her here, when she has got rid of some country-ladies, who greatly bore all people at court.

Er. Let us then stay in the place she has selected. But, since this message affords me some leisure, let me muse a little. [*Exit La Montagne*] I propose to write for her some verses to an air which I know she likes.

[*He walks up and down the stage in a reverie.*

SCENE IV.

ORANTE, CLIMÈNE, ÉRASTE (*at the side of the stage, unseen*).

Or. Everyone will be of my opinion.

Cl. Do you think you will carry your point by obstinacy ?

Or. I think my reasons better than yours.

Cl. I wish some one could hear both.

Or. I see a gentleman here who is not ignorant; he will be able to judge of our dispute. Marquis, a word, I beg of you. Allow us to ask you to decide in a quarrel between us two; we had a discussion arising from our different opinions, as to what may distinguish the most perfect lovers.

Er. That is a question difficult to settle; you had best look for a more skilful judge.

Or. No: you speak to no purpose. Your wit is much commended; and we know you. We know that everyone, with justice, gives you the character of a . . .

Er. Oh, I beseech you . . .

Or. In a word, you shall be our umpire, and you must spare us a couple of minutes.

Cl. [*To Orante*] Now you are retaining one who must condemn you: for, to be brief, if what I venture to hold be true, this gentleman will give the victory to my arguments.

Er. [*Aside*] Would that I could get hold of any rascal to invent something to get me off!

Or. [*To Climène*] For my part, I am too much assured of his sense to fear that he will decide against me. [*To Eraste*] Well, this great contest which rages between us is to know whether a lover should be jealous.

Cl. Or, the better to explain my opinion and yours, which ought to please most, a jealous man or one that is not so?

Or. For my part, I am clearly for the last.

Cl. As for me, I stand up for the first.

Or. I believe that our heart must declare for him who best displays his respect.

Cl. And I, that, if our sentiments are to be shewn, it ought to be for him who makes his love most apparent.

Or. Yes; but we perceive the ardour of a lover much better through respect than through jealousy.

Cl. It is my opinion that he who is attached to us, loves us the more that he shows himself jealous.

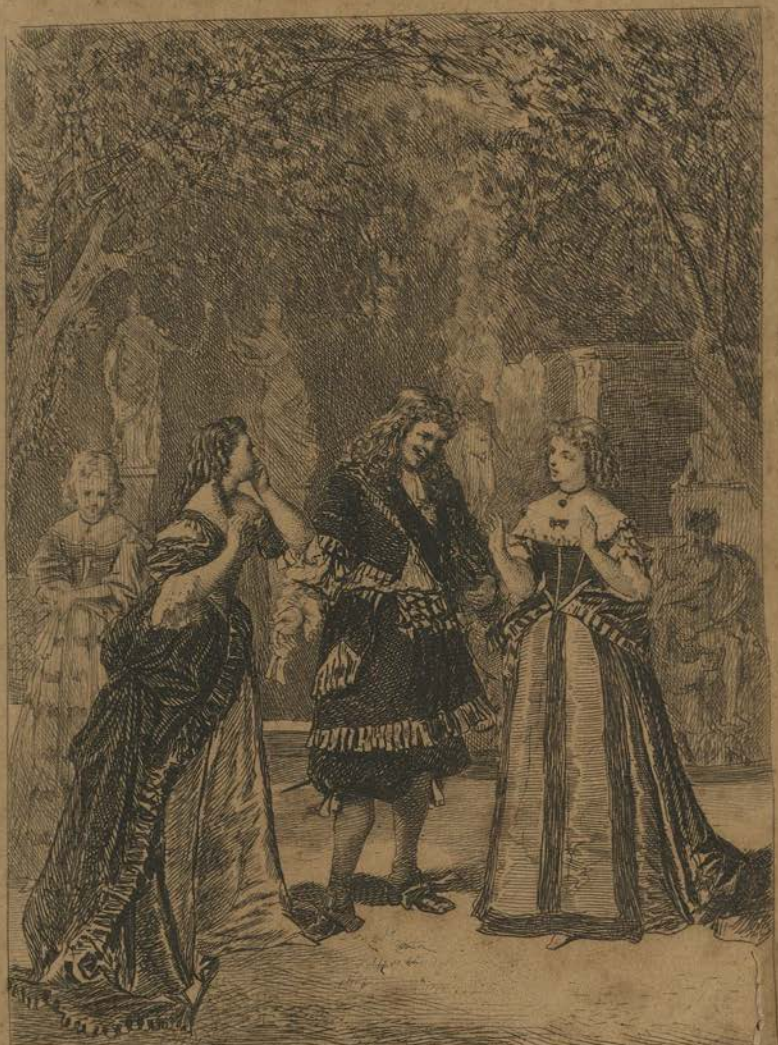
Or. Fie, Climène, do not call lovers those men whose love is like hatred, and who, instead of showing their respect and their ardour, give themselves no thought save how to

become wearisome; whose minds, being ever prompted by some gloomy passion, seek to make a crime out of the slightest actions, are too blind to believe them innocent, and demand an explanation for a glance; who, if we seem a little sad, at once complain that their presence is the cause of it, and when the least joy sparkles in our eyes, will have their rivals to be at the bottom of it; who, in short, assuming a right because they are greatly in love, never speak to us save to pick a quarrel, dare to forbid anyone to approach us, and become the tyrants of their very conquerors. As for me, I want lovers to be respectful; their submission is a surer proof of our sway.

Cl. Fie, do not call those men true lovers who are never violent in their passion; those lukewarm gallants, whose tranquil hearts already think everything quite sure, have no fear of losing us, and overweeningly suffer their love to slumber day by day, are on good terms with their rivals, and leave a free field for their perseverance. So sedate a love incites my anger; to be without jealousy is to love coldly. I would that a lover, in order to prove his flame, should have his mind shaken by eternal suspicions, and, by sudden outbursts, show clearly the value he sets upon her to whose hand he aspires. Then his restlessness is applauded; and, if he sometimes treats us a little roughly, the pleasure of seeing him, penitent at our feet, to excuse himself for the outbreak of which he has been guilty, his tears, his despair at having been capable of displeasing us, are a charm to soothe all our anger.

Or. If much violence is necessary to please you, I know who would satisfy you; I am acquainted with several men in Paris who love well enough to beat their fair ones openly.

Cl. If to please you, there must never be jealousy, I know several men just suited to you; lovers of such endur-



ing mood that they would see you in the arms of thirty people without being concerned about it.

Or. And now you must, by your sentence, declare whose love appears to you preferable.

[*Orphise appears at the back of the stage, and sees Éraste between Orante and Climène.*]

Er. Since I cannot avoid giving judgment, I mean to satisfy you both at once; and, in order, not to blame that which is pleasing in your eyes, the jealous man loves more, but the other loves wisely.

Cl. The judgment is very judicious; but . . .

Er. It is enough. I have finished. After what I have said, permit me to leave you

SCENE V.

ORPHISE, ÉRASTE.

Er. [*Seeing Orphise, and going to meet her*] How long you have been, madam, and how I suffer . . .

Orph. Nay, nay, do not leave such a pleasant conversation. You are wrong to blame me for having arrived too late. [*Pointing to Orante and Climène, who have just left*] You had wherewithal to get on without me.

Er. Will you be angry with me without reason, and reproach me with what I am made to suffer? Oh, I beseech you, stay . . .

Orph. Leave me, I beg, and hasten to rejoin your company.

SCENE VI.

ÉRASTE, *alone.*

Heaven! must bores of both sexes conspire this day to frustrate my dearest wishes? But let me follow her in spite of her resistance, and make my innocence clear in her eyes

SCENE VII.

DORANTE, ÉRASTE.

Dor. Ah, Marquis, continually we find tedious people interrupting the course of our pleasures! You see me enraged on account of a splendid hunt, which a booby . . . It is a story I must relate to you.

Er. I am looking for some one, and cannot stay.

Dor. [*Retaining him*] Egad, I shall tell it you as we go along. We were a well selected company who met yesterday to hunt a stag; on purpose we went to sleep on the ground itself—that is, my dear sir, far away in the forest. As the chase is my greatest pleasure, I wished, to do the thing well, to go to the wood myself; we decided to concentrate our efforts upon a stag which every one said was seven years old.[26] But my own opinion was—though I did not stop to observe the marks—that it was only a stag of the second year.[27] We had separated, as was necessary, into different parties, and were hastily breakfasting on some new-laid eggs, when a regular country-gentleman, with a long sword, proudly mounted on his brood-mare, which he honoured with the name of his good mare, came up to pay us an awkward compliment, presenting to us at the same time, to increase our vexation, a great booby of a son, as stupid as his father. He styled himself a great sportsman, and begged that he might have the pleasure of accompanying us. Heaven preserve every sensible sportsman, when hunting, from a fellow who carries a dog's horn, which sounds when it ought not; from those gentry who, followed by ten mangy dogs, call them "my

[26] The original expression is *cerf dix-corps;* this, according to the *dictionnaire de chasse*, is a seven years' old animal.

[27] The technical term is: "a knobbler;" in French, *un cerf à sa seconde tête.*

pack," and play the part of wonderful hunters. His request granted, and his knowledge commended, we all of us started the deer.[28] Within thrice the length of the leash, tally-ho! the dogs were put on the track of the stag. I encouraged them, and blew a loud blast. My stag emerged from the wood, and crossed a pretty wide plain, the dogs after him, but in such good order that you could have covered them all with one cloak. He made for the forest. Then we slipped the old pack upon him; I quickly brought out my sorrel-horse. You have seen him?

Er. I think not.

Dor. Not seen him? The animal is as good as he is beautiful; I bought him some days ago from Gaveau.[29] I leave you to think whether that dealer, who has such a respect for me, would deceive me in such a matter; I am satisfied with the horse. He never indeed sold a better, or a better-shaped one. The head of a barb, with a clear star; the neck of a swan, slender, and very straight; no mo[re] shoulder than a hare; short-jointed, and full of vivacity in his motion. Such feet—by Heaven! such [f]eet!—double-haunched: to tell you the truth, it was [I] alone who found the way to break him in. Gaveau's [L]ittle John never mounted him without trembling, th[ough] he did his best to unconcerned. A back th[at] beats any horse's for and leg[s] Hea[ven]![30] In short, he is a [cos]t a hundred pistoles [des]tined for the King to [be] in high spirits to see

s; brisées means "blinks." "Blinks are the boughs or p its course."

time.

given by the Dauphin in d also that of the "round *donis* of the same author.

some of the hounds coursing over the plain to get the better of the deer. I pressed on, and found myself in a by-thicket at the heels of the dogs, with none else but Drécar.[31] There for an hour our stag was at bay. Upon this, I cheered on the dogs, and made a terrible row. In short, no hunter was ever more delighted! I alone started him again; and all was going on swimmingly, when a young stag joined ours. Some of my dogs left the others. Marquis, I saw them, as you may suppose, follow with hesitation, and Finaut was at a loss. But he suddenly turned, which delighted me very much, and drew the dogs the right way, whilst I sounded horn and hallooed, "Finaut! Finaut!" I again with pleasure discovered the track of the deer by a mole-hill, and blew away at my leisure. A few dogs ran back to me, when, as ill-luck would have it, the young stag came over to our country bumpkin. My blunderer began blowing like mad, and bellowed aloud, "Tallyho! tallyho! tallyho!" All my dogs left me, and made for my booby. I hastened there, and found the track again on the highroad. But, my dear fellow, I had scarcely cast my eyes on the ground, when I discovered it was the other animal, and was very much annoyed at it. It was in vain to point out to the country fellow the difference between the print of my stag's hoof and his. He still maintained, like ignoran[illegible]rtsman, this was the pack's stag; a[illegible] gave the dogs time to get[illegible] in a rage, and, heartily c[illegible] my horse up hill and dow[illegible]oughs as thick as my arm. [illegible]y first scent, who set off, to m[illegible]tag, as though he were in full[illegible]; but,

[31] A fam[illegible]

did ever such an accident happen? To tell you the truth, Marquis, it floored me. Our stag, newly started, passed our bumpkin, who, thinking to show what an admirable sportsman he was, shot him just in the forehead with a horse-pistol that he had brought with him, and cried out to me from a distance, "Ah, I've brought the beast down!" Good Heavens! did any one ever hear of pistols in stag-hunting? As for me, when I came to the spot, I found the whole affair so odd, that I put spurs to my horse in a rage, and returned home at a gallop, without saying a single word to that ignorant fool.

Er. You could not have done better; your prudence was admirable. That is how we must get rid of bores. Farewell.

Dor. When you like, we will go somewhere where we need not dread country-hunters.

Er. [*Alone*] Very well. I think I shall lose patience in the end. Let me make all haste, and try to excuse myself.

Ballet to Act II.

First Entry.

Bowlers stop Éraste to measure a distance about which there is a dispute. He gets clear of them with difficulty, and leaves them to dance a measure, composed of all the postures usual to that game.

Second Entry.

Little boys with slings enter and interrupt them, who are in their turn driven out by

Third Entry.

Old bowlers, men and women, their fathers, and others, who are also driven out in their turn.

Fourth Entry.

A gardener, who dances alone, and then retires.

ACT III. SCENE I.

ÉRASTE, LA MONTAGNE.

Er. It is true that on the one hand, my efforts have succeeded; the object of my love is at length appeased. But on the other hand I am wearied, and the cruel stars have persecuted my passion with double fury. Yes, Damis, her guardian, the worst of bores, is again hostile to my tenderest desires, has forbidden me to see his lovely niece, and wishes to provide her to-morrow with another husband. Yet Orphise, in spite of his refusal, deigns to grant me this evening a favour; I have prevailed upon the fair one to suffer me to see her in her own house, in private. Love prefers above all secret favours; it finds a pleasure in the obstacle which it masters; the slightest conversation with the beloved beauty becomes, when it is forbidden, a supreme favour. I am going to the rendezvous; it is almost the hour; since I wish to be there rather before than after my time.

La M. Shall I follow you?

Er. No. I fear lest you should make me known to certain suspicious persons.

La M. But . . .

Er. I do not desire it.

La M. I must obey you. But at least, if at a distance . . .

Er. For the twentieth time will you hold your tongue? And will you never give up this practice of perpetually making yourself a troublesome servant?

SCENE II.

CARITIDÈS, ÉRASTE.

Car. Sir, it is an unseasonable time to do myself the honour of waiting upon you; morning would be more fit for performing such a duty, but it is not very easy to meet you, for you are always asleep, or in town. At least your servants so assure me. I have chosen this opportunity to see you. And yet this is a great happiness with which fortune favours me, for a couple of moments later I should have missed you.

Er. Sir, do you desire something of me?

Car. I acquit myself, sir, of what I owe you; and come to you . . . Excuse the boldness which inspires me, if . . .

Er. Without so much ceremony, what have you to say to me?

Car. As the rank, wit, and generosity which every one extols in you . . .

Er. Yes, I am very much extolled. Never mind that, sir.

Car. Sir, it is a vast difficulty when a man has to introduce himself; we should always be presented to the great by people who commend us in words, whose voice, being listened to, delivers with authority what may cause our slender merit to be known. In short, I could have wished that some persons well-informed could have told you, sir, what I am . . .

Er. I see sufficiently, sir, what you are. Your manner of accosting me makes that clear.

Car. Yes, I am a man of learning charmed by your worth; not one of those learned men whose name ends simply in *us*. Nothing is so common as a name with a Latin termination. Those we dress in Greek have as much

superior look; and in order to have one ending in *ès*, I call myself Mr Caritidès.

Er. Caritidès be it. What have you to say?

Car. I wish, sir, to read you a petition, which I venture to beg of you to present to the King, as your position enables you to do.

Er. Why, sir, you can present it yourself! . . . .

Car. It is true that the King grants that supreme favour; but, from the very excess of his rare kindness, so many villainous petitions, sir, are presented that they choke the good ones; the hope I entertain is that mine should be presented when his Majesty is alone.

Er. Well, you can do it, and choose your own time.

Car. Ah, sir, the door-keepers are such terrible fellows! They treat men of learning like snobs and butts; I can never get beyond the guard-room. The ill-treatment I am compelled to suffer would make me withdraw from court for ever, if I had not conceived the certain hope that you will be my Mecænas with the King. Yes, your influence is to me a certain means . . .

Er. Well, then, give it me; I will present it.

Car. Here it is. But at least, hear it read.

Er. No. . . .

Car. That you may be acquainted with it, sir, I beg.

"TO THE KING.

"*Sire,—Your most humble, most obedient, most faithful and most learned subject and servant, Caritidès, a Frenchman by birth, a Greek*[32] *by profession, having considered the great and notable abuses which are perpetrated in the*

[32] The original has *Grec*, a Greek. Can Caritides have wished to allude to the *grecque fides? Grec* means also a cheat at cards, and is said to owe its name to a certain Apoulos, a knight of Greek origin, who was caught in the very act of cheating at play in the latter days of Louis XIV.'s reign, even in the palace of the *grand monarque*.

inscriptions on the signs of houses, shops, taverns, bowling-alleys, and other places in your good city of Paris; inasmuch as certain ignorant composers of the said inscriptions subvert, by a barbarous, pernicious and hateful spelling, every kind of sense and reason, without any regard for etymology, analogy, energy or allegory whatsoever, to the great scandal of the republic of letters, and of the French nation, which is degraded and dishonoured, by the said abuses and gross faults, in the eyes of strangers, and notably of the Germans, curious readers and inspectors of the said inscriptions . . . ." [33]

Er. This petition is very long, and may very likely weary . . .

Car. Ah, sir, not a word could be cut out.

Er. Finish quickly.

Car. [Continuing] "*Humbly petitions your Majesty to constitute, for the good of his state and the glory of his realm, an office of controller, supervisor, corrector, reviser and restorer in general of the said inscriptions; and with this office to honour your supplicant, as well in consideration of his rare and eminent erudition, as of the great and signal services which he has rendered to the state and to your Majesty, by making the anagram of your said Majesty in French, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, Chaldean, Arabic . . .*"

Er. [*Interrupting him*] Very good. Give it me quickly and retire: it shall be seen by the King; the thing is as good as done.

Car. Alas! sir, to show my petition is everything. If the King but see it, I am sure of my point: for as his justice is great in all things, he will never be able to refuse

[33] This is an allusion, either to the reputation of the Germans as great drinkers, or as learned decipherers of all kinds of inscriptions.

my prayer. For the rest, to raise your fame to the skies, give me your name and surname in writing, and I will make a poem, in which the first letters of your name shall appear at both ends of the lines, and in each half measure.

Er. Yes, you shall have it to-morrow, Mr Caritidès. [*Alone*] Upon my word, such learned men are perfect asses. Another time I should have heartily laughed at his folly.

SCENE III.

ORMIN, ERASTE.

Orm. Though a matter of great consequence brings me here, I wished that man to leave before speaking to you.

Er. Very well. But make haste; for I wish to be gone.

Orm. I almost fancy that the man who has just left you has vastly annoyed you, sir, by his visit. He is a troublesome old man whose mind is not quite right, and for whom I have always some excuse ready to get rid of him. On the Mall,[34] in the Luxembourg,[35] and in the Tuileries he wearies people with his fancies; men like you should avoid the conversation of all those good-for-nothing pedants. For my part I have no fear of troubling you, since I am come, sir, to make your fortune.

Er. [*Aside*] This is some alchymist; one of those creatures who have nothing, and are always promising you ever so much riches. [*Aloud*] Have you discovered that blessed stone, sir, which alone can enrich all the kings of the earth?

Orm. Aha! what a funny idea! Heaven forbid, sir, that I should be one of those fools. I do not foster idle

[34] The Mall was a promenade in Paris, shaded by trees, near the Arsenal.

[35] The Luxembourg was in Molière's time the most fashionable promenade of Paris.

dreams; I bring you here sound words of advice which I would communicate, through you, to the King, and which I always carry about me, sealed up. None of those silly plans and vain chimeras which are dinned in the ears of our superintendants;[36] none of your beggarly schemes which rise to no more than twenty or thirty millions; but one which, at the lowest reckoning, will give the King a round four hundred millions yearly, with ease, without risk or suspicion, without oppressing the nation in any way. In short, it is a scheme for an inconceivable profit, which will be found feasible at the first explanation. Yes, if only through you I can be encouraged . . .

Er. Well, we will talk of it. I am rather in a hurry.

Orm. If you will promise to keep it secret, I will unfold to you this important scheme.

Er. No, no; I do not wish to know your secret.

Orm. Sir, I believe you are too discreet to divulge it, and I wish to communicate it to you frankly, in two words. I must see that none can hear us. [*After seeing that no one is listening, he approaches Éraste's ear*]. This marvellous plan, of which I am the inventor, is . . .

Er. A little farther off, sir, for a certain reason.

Orm. You know, without any need of my telling you, the great profit which the King yearly receives from his seaports. Well, the plan of which no one has yet thought, and which is an easy matter, is to make all the coasts of France into famous ports. This would amount to vast sums; and if . . .

Er. The scheme is good, and will greatly please the King. *Farewell. We shall see each other again.*

Orm. At all events assist me, for you are the first to whom I have spoken of it.

[36] This is an allusion to the giver of the feast, Mons. Fouquet, *surintendant des finances.* See also page 85, note I.

Er. Yes, yes.

Orm. If you would lend me a couple of pistoles, you could repay yourself out of the profits of the scheme . . .

Er. [*Gives money to Ormin.*] Gladly. [*Alone*] Would to Heaven, that at such a price I could get rid of all who trouble me! How ill-timed their visit is! At last I think I may go. Will any one else come to detain me?

SCENE IV.

FILINTE, ERASTE.

Fil. Marquis, I have just heard strange tidings.

Er. What?

Fil. That some one has just now quarrelled with you.

Er. With me?

Fil. What is the use of dissimulation? I know on good authority that you have been called out; and, as your friend, I come, at all events, to offer you my services against all mankind.

Er. I am obliged to you; but believe me you do me . . .

Fil. You will not admit it; but you are going out without attendants. Stay in town, or go into the country, you shall go nowhere without my accompanying you.

Er. [*Aside*] Oh, I shall go mad.

Fil. Where is the use of hiding from me?

Er. I swear to you, Marquis, that you have been deceived.

Fil. It is no use denying it.

Er. May Heaven smite me, if any dispute . . .

Fil. Do you think I believe you?

Er. Good Heaven, I tell you without concealment that . . .

Fil. Do not think me such a dupe and simpleton as

Er. Will you oblige me?

Fil. No.

Er. Leave me, I pray.

Fil. Nothing of the sort, Marquis.

Er. An assignation to-night at a certain place . . .

Fil. I do not quit you. Wherever it be, I mean to follow you.

Er. On my soul, since you mean me to have a quarrel, I agree to it, to satisfy your zeal. It shall be with you, who put me in a rage, and of whom I cannot get rid by fair means.

Fil. That is a sorry way of receiving the service of a friend. But as I do you so ill an office, farewell. Finish what you have on hand without me.

Er. You will be my friend when you leave me. [*Alone*] But see what misfortunes happen to me! They will have made me miss the hour appointed.

SCENE V.

DAMIS, L'ÉPINE, ÉRASTE, LA RIVIÈRE, *and his Companions.*

Dam. [*Aside*] What! the rascal hopes to obtain her in spite of me! Ah! my just wrath shall know how to prevent him!

Er. [*Aside*] I see some one there at Orphise's door. What! must there always be some obstacle to the passion she sanctions!

Dam. [*To L'Épine*] Yes, I have discovered that my niece, in spite of my care, is to receive Éraste in her room to-night, alone.

La R. [*To his companions*] What do I hear those people saying of our master? Let us approach softly, without betraying ourselves.

Dam. [*To L'Épine*] But before he has a chance of accomplishing his design, we must pierce his treacherous heart with a thousand blows. Go and fetch those whom I mentioned just now, and place them in ambush where I told you, so that at the name of Éraste they may be ready to avenge my honour, which his passion has the presumption to outrage; to break off the assignation which brings him here, and quench his guilty flame in his blood.

La R. [*Attacking Damis with his companions*] Before your fury can destroy him, wretch! you shall have to deal with us!

Er. Though he would have killed me, honour urges me here to rescue the uncle of my mistress. [*To Damis*] I am on your side, Sir. [*He draws his sword and attacks La Rivière and his companions, whom he puts to flight.*]

Dam. Heavens! By whose aid do I find myself saved from a certain death? To whom am I indebted for so rare a service?

Er. [*Returning*] In serving you, I have done but an act of justice.

Dam. Heavens! Can I believe my ears! Is this the hand of Éraste?

Er. Yes, yes, Sir, it is I. Too happy that my hand has rescued you: too unhappy in having deserved your hatred.

Dam. What! Eraste, whom I was resolved to have assassinated has just used his sword to defend me! Oh, this is too much; my heart is compelled to yield; whatever your love may have meditated to-night, this remarkable display of generosity ought to stifle all animosity. I blush for my crime, and blame my prejudice. My hatred has too long done you injustice! To show you openly I no longer entertain it, I unite you this very night to your love.

SCENE VI.

ORPHISE, DAMIS, ÉRASTE.

Orph. [*Entering with a silver candlestick in her hand*] Sir, what has happened that such a terrible disturbance . . .

Dam. Niece, nothing but what is very agreeable, since, after having blamed, for a long time, your love for Éraste, I now give him to you for a husband. His arm has warded off the deadly thrust aimed at me; I desire that your hand reward him.

Orph. I owe everything to you; if, therefore, it is to pay him your debt, I consent, as he has saved your life.

Er. My heart is so overwhelmed by this great miracle, that amidst this ecstasy, I doubt if I am awake.

Dam. Let us celebrate the happy lot that awaits you; and let our violins put us in a joyful mood. [*As the violins strike up, there is a knock at the door.*]

Er. Who knocks so loud?

SCENE VII.

DAMIS, ORPHISE, ÉRASTE, L'ÉPINE.

L'Ep. Sir, here are masks, with kits and tabors.

[*The masks enter, filling the stage*]

Er. What! Bores for ever? Hulloa, guards, here. Turn out these rascals for me.

Ballet to Act III.

First Entry.

Swiss guards, with halberds,[37] drive out all the troublesome masks, and then retire to make room for a dance of

[37] The origin of the introduction of Swiss Guards (mercenaries) in the service of the French and other foreign powers may be ascribed to the fact that Switzerland itself, being too poor to maintain soldiers in

Second Entry.

Four shepherds and a shepherdess, who, in the opinion of all who saw it, concluded the entertainment with much grace.

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time of peace, allowed them to serve other nations on condition of coming back immediately to their own cantons in time of war or invasion.

It is particularly with France that Switzerland contracted treaties to furnish certain contingents in case of need. The first of these dates back as far as 1444 between the Dauphin, afterwards Charles VII., and the different cantons. This Act was renewed in 1453, and the number of soldiers to be furnished was fixed once for all, the minimum being 6000, and the maximum 16,000. The Helvetians, who until 1515 had always been faithful to their engagements, turned traitors in that year against Francis I., who defeated them at Marignan. But the good feeling was soon afterwards re-established, and a new treaty, almost similar to the former, restored the harmony between the two nations.

Another document is extant, signed at Baden in 1553, by which the cantons bind themselves to furnish Henry II. with as many troops as he may want. It is particularly remarkable, inasmuch as it served as a basis for all subsequent ones until 1671. These conventions have not always been faithfully carried out, for the Swiss contracted engagements with other nations, notably with Spain, Naples, and Sardinia, and even with Portugal. At the commencement of the campaign of 1697, Louis XIV. had, notwithstanding all this, as many as 32,000 Swiss in his service, the highest number ever attained. The regulations for the foreign colonels and captains in their relations among themselves, and with the French Government, were not unlike those in force at present for the native soldiery in our Indian possessions. Towards the end of Lous XIV.'s reign the number decreased to 14,400, officers included; it rose in 1773 to 19,836, and during the wars of 1742-48, to 21,300. The ebb and flow of their numbers continued from that time until the Revolution of 1830, when they were finally abolished.

They received a much higher pay than the national troops, and had besides this many other advantages, one of them being that their officers had in the army the next grade higher than that which they occupied in their own regiments; for instance, the colonel of a Swiss regiment had the rank of a major-general, and retired on the pay of a lieutenant-general, &c. They enjoyed the same privileges, with some slight modifications, wherever they served elsewhere.

APPENDIX.

A, Page 97.

This is the opening scene of Shadwell's *Sullen Lovers, or the Impertinents*, imitated from the same scene in Molière's *Bores*. Eraste becomes Stanford, "A Morose Melancholy Man, tormented beyond measure with the Impertinence of People, and resolved to leave the World to be quit of them," and La Montagne is changed into Roger, Stanford's man.

Enter STANFORD, *and* ROGER *his man.*

Stan. In what Unlucky Minute was I born,
To be tormented thus where e're I go,
What an Impertinent age is this we live in
When all the World is grown so troublesome,
That I should envy him that spends his dayes
In some remote and unfrequented Place,
With none but Bears and Wolves for his Companions
And never see's the folly of Mankind.
Rog. Good Sir, be patient, let it not disturb you.
Stan. Patient ——
Thou may'st as well teach patience to a man
That has a fit o'th' Collick or the Stone . . .
In the morning . . . comes in a brisk
Gay Coxcomb of the Town —— O Lord, Sir (sayes he)
I am glad I've taken you within, I came on purpose
To tell you the newes, d'ye hear it? then might I
Reasonably expect to hear of some great Intrigue or
Other; At the least that the Kings of France and Spain
Were agreed——Then after he had bid me guess
Four or five times, with a great deal of amazement
Sayes he: Jack Scatterbrain comes in with ten Guinny's
Last night into the Groom-porters,[32] and
Carry'd away 200, and then Teaz'd me
Half an hour, to tell me all his Throwes . . .
The other day, being tyr'd almost to death with the
Impertinence of Fopps that importun'd me;

[32] See Pepys' Diary, Jan.; 1667-8.

For Variety, I ventur'd into a Coffee-house ;
There I found a Company of formal Starch'd-Fellows
Talking Gravely, Wisely, and nothing to the purpose ;
And with undaunted Impudence discoursing of the
Right of Empires ; the Mannagement of Peace and War
And the great Intrigues of Councils ; when o' my
Conscience you wou'd have sooner took 'em for
Tooth-Drawers then Privy-Counsellors . . .
(At Court) I find a company of gaudy nothings
That feign would be Courtiers ; that think they are
Hardly dealt withall not to have Imployment too :
Besides, when after all my persecutions, I think
To ease my self at night by sleep, as last night
About eleven or twelve of Clock ; at a solemn
Funeral the Bells set out : That Men should be
Such Owles to keep five thousand
People awake, with Ringing a Peale to him that does not hear
it . . .
A Curse upon 'em, this was no sooner past, but
About two in the Morning comes the Bell-man
And in a dismal Tone repeats Worse Rhymes
Then a Cast Poet of the Nursery can make ; after
Him, come those Rogues that wake People with their
Barbarous tunes, and upon their Toting
Instruments make a more Hellish-Noise then they
Do at a Play-house, When they flourish for the
Entrance of Witches.

B, Page 103.

Sir Positive At-all, the foolish knight, is a very well drawn character. This is how in the *Sullen Lovers* (Act i. Scene 1) he represents Lisandre, the dancing *Facheux* (Act i. Scene 5).

Sir Positive, Ninny, Stanford, Lovel, Woodcock.

Sir Pos. Ah dear Jack ! Have I found thee ? I would not have but seen you for twenty pounds ; I have made this Morning a glorious Corrant, an immortal Corrant, a Corrant with a Soul in it ; I'll defie all Europe to make such another ; You make talk of your *Baptists*, your *Locks* and your *Banisters ;* let me see 'em mend this ; Why here's at least 25 notes compass, Fa, la, la, etc. You shall hear.

Wood. Come, Sir Positive, let's hear't.

Sir Pos. With all my Heart : Fa, la, la.

Stan. Oh Heaven ! Sir Positive, though I love Musick, yet at present I must tell you, I am *out of tune.*

Nin. Out of Tune, Ha, ha, ha, —— now have you said the best thing in the World, and do not know it.

Stan. Sir Positive, I must take my leave of you, I must not lose my Business for a little Musick——.

Sir Pos. Hold, now you talk of Musick——.

Stan. 'Slife, Sir, I talk of my Business.

Sir Pos. But for Musick, if any Man in England gives you a better account of that than I do, I will give all Mankind leave to spit upon me; You must know, it's a thing I have thought upon and consider'd, and made it my Business from my Cradle; besides, I am so naturally a Musician, that *Gamut, A re, Bemi* were the first Words I could learn to speak. Do you like *Baptist's* way of composing?

Lov. No doubt, Sir, he's a great Master:

Wood. As ever was born, take that from me.

Sir Pos. Upon my Word, Stanford, I will make all my Tunes like his —— You shall hear his Vein in this Corrant now . . .

Nin. Yes doubtless, Sir Positive has a great soul for Musick in him; he has great power in Corrantos and Jiggs, and composes all the Musick to my Playes; he has great power . . .

Sir Pos. Come, you shall hear't ——.

Stan. Sir, I beg your pardon; I'll hear it some other time.

Sir Pos. Pish, pish, Upon my Honour thou shalt stay,
And hear it now.

Lov. Come, Dear Sir Positive, make us happy.

Sir Pos. Observe! here's Flâme in this Corrant—Fa, la, la,
There's a delicate Note in *B. Fa Bemi* in *Alt*,
And observe now how it falls down to *C. Sol. Fa. Ut.*
Fa, la, la—There's Mastery for you.

Stan. I do not like that part of your Corrant.

Sir Pos. It is a prodigious thing, thou should'st ever be in my company, and understand Musick no better; thou hast found fault with the best part of the Corrant. . . . Observe here how cunningly it falls out of the Key, Fa, la, la, etc. And now at last it ends quite out of the Key.

Stan. Well, well! it's an Excellent Corrant; What the Devil
Will you have more? Fare you well.

Sir Pos. No, no; Stay but one Minute and you shall hear it
All together. Ninny, Do you beat time.

Wood. Well thought on, do, and I'll Dance.
To't Dear Hearts.

Stan. Now, Lovel, What think you, this Torture's worse
Than any the Dutch invented at Amboyna.

[*Sir Positive sings, Ninny beats false time, and Woodcock dances to it.*

Sir Pos. Here's a Corrant for you. Ha, Stanford!
What think'st of this?

Wood. Think, quoth a'. I think I danc'd it as well
As any man in England, Bully-Rock.
Lov. Certainly, Sir Positive, he dances very finely.
Sir Pos. As any man that ever was born upon two Leggs:
For betwixt you and I, I taught him every step he has.

C, Page 104.

Woodcock, a familiar loving coxcomb, who embraces and kisses all men, is also very well conceived, though he is but a slightly altered picture of Sir Positive At-all. This is how he is represented in Act ii., Scene 1 of the *Sullen Lovers*. It is almost a repetition of Lisandre (Act i., Scene 5), less the music and dancing.

(*As* STANFORD *is going out, enter* WOODCOCK.)

Woodcock. Dear Jack, thy humble servant: How dost do? My footman told me, he saw thy man come in here, which made me believe I should find thee here; and I had no power to stay from thee, my dear Bully-Rock, for I can enjoy myself no where so well as in thy company. Let me kiss thee dear heart; Gad, I'd rather kiss thee than any woman.

Stanford. This is beyond all example; O horrid, his kindness is a greater persecution than the injuries of others.

Wood. I'll tell thee, dear heart, I love thee with all my heart: Thou art a man of sense, dear Rogue; I am infinitely happy in thy friendship; for I meet with so many impertinent silly fellows every day, that a man cannot live in quiet for 'em, dear heart. For between you and I, this town is more pestered with idle fellows, that thrust themselves into company, than the country is with attorneys, is it not, Jack?

Stan. Yes, I have too much reason to believe you. [*Aside*] A curse on you.

Wood. Ay, did I not tell you so, Jack? ha! but this is not my business: Dear Rascal, Kiss me, I have a secret to impart to thee, but if it take the least air I am undone. I have a project in my head shall raise me £20,000. I know you will promise secrecy, dear heart.

D, Page 103.

Shadwell has treated the second scene of the second act of *The Bores* as follows in *The Sullen Lovers* (Act iii., Scene 1). The gambler, Alcippe, is in the English play called Huffe; the latter is kicked by Stanford, a practical joke which would not be allowed on the French stage.

HUFFE, STANFORD.

Huffe. O Sir, I'll tell you, I have had the severest fortune that ever man had.

Stan. Away, away.

Huffe. For Heaven's sake hear, it's the most prodigious thing you ever heard. . . . I was playing at Back-gammon for my Dinner, which I won; and from thence we came to five up for half a piece; of the first set I had three for love and lost it; of the second I Gammon'd him, and threw Doublets at last, which you know made four, and lost that too; of the third I won never a game.

Stan. O Devil! Is this the Miraculous thing you would tell me. Fare-well.

Huffe. Hold, hold, Sir! You don't hear the end on't.

Stan. Nor do I desire it, Sir.

Huffe. I'le tell you, Sir, of the fourth set I was four to two, and for the last game my Tables were fill'd up, and I had born my three odd men, so that you know I had two upon every point. . . .

Stan. . . . Sir, I tell you, I don't understand Back-gammon.

Huffe. Not understand Back-gammon: Sir, that you may understand well what I say, I'le tell you what Back-gammon is. . . .

Stan. I desire none of your Instruction.

Huffe. Well: then as I was a saying, I had just two upon every point, and he had two men to enter; and as the Devil wou'd have, my next throw was Size-Ace: he enter'd one of his Men a Size; then, Mr Stanford, to see the Dam'd luck on't, I threw Size-Sinke next, and the very next throw he enter'd upon a Sink, and having his game very backward, won the game, and afterwards he Set so, that I lost every penny.

Stan. This will distract me; What the Devill's this to me.

Huffe. No; but did you ever hear the like in your life?

Stan. This puts me beyond all patience.

E, Page 111.

The scene between Eraste and La Montagne in *The Bores* (Act ii., Scene 3) is thus rendered in *The Sullen Lovers* (Act ii., Scene 1).

STANFORD, ROGER.

Stan. Well! What's the News?

Rog. Do you earnestly desire to know, Sir?

Stan. Must I have Impertinence in my own Family, too?

Rog. O! I am so out of breath, I am not able to speak one word; but if I had never so much breath, I cou'd tell you nothing but what you'd be glad to hear: If I had the winde of an Irish Foot-man, nay, of a Non-conforming Parson —— or.

Stan. Or . . . one Similitude more, and I'le Break that Foole's head of yours.

Rog. Well, Sir, since you are in haste, I'le be as brief as a Fiddler, after he is paid for scraping, for I love to be so in Cases of this Importance, I have heard——

Stan. But, you Dog, a Sentence after your Similitude; You are as impertinent as a Country Witness.

Rog. I have done, Sir, and now I'le tell you in one Word: Hold, Sir! here's a Spider in your Perriwigg.

Stan. Death, you Rascal! I'le ram it down your Throat.

Rog. Be patient, Sir: Seneca advises to moderate our passions.

Stan. Hang ye', Rascal! Seneca is an Ass in your mouth. Tell me quickly, or——

Rog. Why, Sir, you are so impatient you will not hear me.

Stan. 'Faith, but I will speak.

Rog. Not to boast of my diligence, which, though I say it, is as much——

Stan. You Dogg, tell me quickly, or I'le cut your Eares off.

Rog. Why, Mr Lovel, wou'd have you come to him; What wou'd you have?

Stan. If I were not in haste, Sirrah, I'de teach you to know your Man, and who you may put your Tricks on, you impudent Raskal.

Rog. Death! That I should find impertinence in others, and not see it in myself.

L'ECOLE DES FEMMES.

COMÉDIE.

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES.

A COMEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

(THE ORIGINAL IN VERSE.)

DECEMBER 26TH, 1662.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

The School for Wives, played for the first time in the theatre of the Palais-Royal, on the 26th of Dec. 1662, was the complement of *The School for Husbands*, which it succeeded at an interval of eighteen months, *The Bores* intervening. The one no doubt suggested the other. The central situations of the two have much in common: the arbitrary and jealous lover, to whom circumstances have given almost the authority of a husband; the simple ward, rescued from physical constraint by the unfettered cunning of love. In fact, there is not that contrast of character between the two plays, which the antithesis of their titles might lead us to expect. The text is not altered; we have merely another reading of the same text. Arnolphe is a more refined and rational Sganarelle; and if his fault is the same, and his catastrophe similar, we do not despise him and rejoice in his misfortune, as we were compelled to do with the tyrant of Isabella. His selfishness is, perhaps, equally great, but its exhibition does not render him so odious.

The reason of this is to be found in the display of his many eccentricities, his system of education, his cunning, his choice of foolish servants, his absurd whimsicalities, his pedantry, and, above all, his perpetual restlessness. He hardly ever leaves the stage during the whole of the five acts of the play; he goes away, appears again, moves about, plots, scolds, loses his temper, recovers it, dogmatises, entreats, and, after all, is punished by his very faults. His servants are more stupid than he wishes them to be, his ward more simple than he thought her; he has jeered at husbands who are deceived, and he himself is victimized; he wanted to abuse the confidence Horace placed in him, and becomes himself a dupe; he intended to sacrifice Agnès to his own happiness, and, at the end, becomes "The most unfortunate of mankind."

The troubles of Sganarelle and Arnolphe are the troubles of jealous husbands in every age, and it would be idle to heap up instances in the predecessors of Molière which may have contributed to form his conceptions. One of those that come nearest to the type before us is the story about a gentle knight of Hainault, in the forty-first of the *Nouvelles nouvelles du Roi Louis XI.*, reproduced by Scarron in his *Nouvelles tragi-comiques.*

Still more suggestive is Scarron's *la Précaution inutile*, partly based upon *The Jealous Man of Estremadura*, by Cervantes, in which there are several situations to which we must consider Molière to have been indebted for his first and second acts. The ingenuous self-confidence of Arnolphe, quaintly contrasting with his recurrent jealousies, finds an ante-type in many an ancient Italian story. Straparola's fourth night of the *Piacevoli Notte* (*Agreeable Nights*) has suggested some hints for the third and fourth acts; the fifth is wholly original. Molière's own history also furnished him with his subject. We already mentioned in the Introductory Notice to *The School for Husbands* the supposed connection between Ariste and the author; the latter was now married, and did not find in marriage the happiness he hoped for. Without wishing to attribute to him all the ridiculous absurdities of Arnolphe, or to suppose that his wife was another Agnès, still we imagine that though he had scarcely been married a year, he felt already the necessity of watching over, and if possible, of guiding the steps of his youthful spouse. It seems to us that in many of the sayings of Arnolphe, there is to be found a feeling of bitterness and passion, rather out of place in the mouth of such a ridiculous personage, but which give clear indications of what was even then passing in the mind of our author. The words which Arnolphe uses when kneeling at the feet of Agnès show what tempestuous passions must have possessed Molière; and though it is often dangerous to identify a poet with his creations, still there must be always some part, however small, of the individuality of the originator in the character he produces.

As regards Agnès, whose name is the type of a simple, artless girl, her character develops as the plot of the comedy rolls on. In the first scene, she is an uneducated, ingenuous maiden; but she gradually changes under the influence of love, and becomes earnest, intelligent, and even logical.

This comedy was fiercely attacked by several, who accused it of being wanting in good taste, sound morality, rules of grammar, and, what was more dangerous, of undermining the principles of religion. The second scene of the third act, in which mention is made of "boiling cauldrons," of a soul as "white and spotless as a lily," but "as black as coal," when at fault; of "The Maxims of Marriage or the Duties of a Wife, together with her daily exercise," gave great offence, and were said to be like the phrases of the catechism or the confessional. A former patron of Molière, the Prince of Conti, who had become a mere devotee, wrote against it in his *Traité de la Comédie et des Spectacles*, and in later times, even such men as Fénelon, Jean Jacques Rousseau, and Geoffroy, a critic of the beginning of this century, have found much to blame in this comedy, whilst several literary men, Hazlitt amongst the English, and Honoré de Balzac amongst the French, consider this play as Molière's masterpiece.

This play was dedicated by Molière to the Duchess of Orleans,[1] in the following words :—

MADAM,

I am the most perplexed man in the world when I have to dedicate a book, and I am so little cut out for the style of a dedication, that I do not know how to get through this. Another, in my place, would soon think of a hundred fine things to say of your ROYAL HIGHNESS, upon this title of *the School for Wives*, and upon the offering he made to you of it. But for my part, MADAM, I confess my weakness. I have not the talent of finding any relation between things which have so little connection ; whatever information my brother-authors every day give me in such cases, I do not see what your ROYAL HIGHNESS can have to do with the comedy I present to you.

No body indeed can be at a loss how to praise you. The matter, Madam, is but too obvious, and in whatever way we behold you, we meet with glory upon glory, and perfection upon perfection. You possess, MADAM, the perfection of rank and birth, which makes you respected by all the world. You possess the perfection of charms, both of the mind and body, which makes you admired by all who see you. You possess the perfection of soul, which, if any one dare to say so, makes you be beloved by all who have the honour to come near you : I mean that charming gentleness, with which you temper the stateliness of the great titles you bear ; that obliging goodness, that generous affability, which you shew to every body : and particularly these last, upon which I find plainly I one day shall not be able to be silent. But once more, Madam, I am ignorant of the manner how to bring in here such shining truths ; and these are things, in my opinion, both of too vast an extent and of too high a merit, to be included in a dedication, and mixed with trifles. All things considered, Madam, I do not see what else I can do, beyond dedicating my comedy to you ; and assuring you, with all possible respect, that I am, MADAM, *Your Royal Highness' most Humble, most Obedient, and most Obliged Servant,* MOLIERE.

In the fourth volume of the "Select Comedies of M. de Molière, London, 1732," the translation of *The School for Wives* is dedicated to the Right Honourable Sir William Young, Knight of the Bath, in the following words :—

SIR,

The high Character you bear amongst all People of Genius, Wit, and Learning, is known so universally, that whoever shall here behold the name of Sir WILLIAM YOUNG, will instantly recollect the delightful Idea of one, in whom the strongest Judgment accompanies the most lively Fancy, one whom the *Graces* and the *Muses* smile on, whom much Reading renders the more polite, and in whom both Art and Nature join to furnish out the complete Gentleman.

Those who excel in themselves easily pardon the Mistakes of Others; this Reflection, together with your well-known Propensity to encourage every Attempt, that may prove of Publick Service, emboldens me to lay before you this little *Translation.*

Amongst the modern *Comedies* there are none that come so near the Beauty,

[1] Henrietta of England, daughter of Charles I., first wife of Monsieur, brother of Louis XIV, died at Saint Cloud, the 30th of June 1670, twenty-six years old. Her funeral sermon, preached by Bossuet, remains a perennial monument of pulpit eloquence.

Spirit, and Simplicity of the *Ancients* as those of MOLIERE: His Characters, like theirs, are taken constantly from Nature; his Manners are exactly suited to his Characters; and it is not so much his Endeavour to make his People talk *wittily* as *justly:* a Practice directly contrary to that of some later *Writers,* in whom an extravagant Affectation of *Wit* proves but too often the Destruction of *common Sense.*

Upon this Account several Gentlemen of Reputation have undertaken to translate this *Author,* in hopes thereby of amending the present Taste, by teaching our *Dramatic Writers* what true Nature is, and shewing the *Publick* what sort of Performances deserve its Approbation.

It is, with the same View, that I also have been induc'd to make this Trial, which I presume to beg your Acceptance of, from one amongst the great Number of your Admirers, who is more particularly, SIR, *Your most Obedient, Humble, Servant,* THE TRANSLATOR.

Wycherley, in his *Country Wife,* acted probably in 1672 or 1673, and of which the subject is so indecent that it cannot even be mentioned at the present time, has borrowed from Molière's *School for Wives* the character of Agnès, whom he calls Mrs Pinchwife; he has also partly imitated Arnolphe as Mr Pinchwife, and followed the plot of the French play in all the scenes where those two characters are mentioned, and in some where Alithea and Horner appear. (See Introductory Notice to *The School for Husbands,* page 6.) Voltaire, in his Essay on English Comedy, says of *The Country Wife:* "This piece, I admit, is not a school for good morals and manners, but it is really a school for wit and sound *vis comica.*" We have given in the Appendix what could be quoted. Garrick, in his *Country Girl,* acted in 1776, tried to make Wycherley's play more fit to appear on the English stage, but with little success. It is true he changed Mrs Pinchwife into Miss Peggy: but he also destroyed the vigour of the original, and introduced some alterations in the ending taken chiefly from the last act of Molière's *School for Husbands.* Another alteration of Wycherley's play was a farce, in two acts, called *The Country Wife,* written by an actor, John Lee, and performed at Drury Lane in 1765, for his benefit. But deservedly it met with no success.

John Caryl, probably a Sussex man, and of the Roman Catholic persuasion, was secretary to Queen Mary, the wife of James the Second, and one who followed the fortunes of his abdicated master. For his attachment to this king he was rewarded by him, first, with the honour of knighthood, and afterwards with the honorary titles of Earl Caryl, Baron Dartford. How long he continued in the service of James is unknown; but he was in England in the reign of Queen Anne, and recommended the subject of Mr Pope's *Rape of the Lock* to that author, who, on its publication addressed it to him. He was alive in 1717, and at that time must have been a very old man.[2] He wrote also a tragedy, *The English Princess, or the Death of Richard the Third,* 1667, and a comedy, *Sir Salomon, or the Cautious Coxcomb,* which was

[2] Baker's "Biographica Dramatica," 1812, vol i., p. 91.

not printed till 1671, but was certainly acted in the season of 1669-1670 at the latest. In May 1670, the king and the court being at Dover, they were extremely pleased with the performance of *Sir Salomon;* and as the French court at that time wore very short laced coats, the actor, Nokes, had one made still shorter, in which he acted Sir Arthur Addell; "the Duke of Monmouth gave him his sword and belt from his side, and buckled it on himself, on purpose that he might ape the French,—his appearance was so ridiculous, that at his first entrance he put the King and Court in an excessive laughter; and the French were much chagrined to see themselves aped by such a buffoon as Sir Arthur."[3] All dramatic biographies are agreed that Caryl took his plot from Molière's *School for Wives.* We think that though several of the scenes are imitated from Molière, the plot in *Sir Salomon* is far more intricate. In the English play, old Sir Salomon Single, and in the French Arnolphe, bring up in strict seclusion a young girl, whom they afterwards intend to marry, and in both plays the old men are made the confidants of the lovers, who afterwards really marry the innocent maidens; but in *The School for Wives* the characters of young Single, Mr Barter, an Indy merchant, that of Timothy, the steward, Mr Wary, and Mrs Julia, are wanting, whilst no counterpart of either Chrysalde or Enrique from *The School for Wives* is to be found in *Sir Salomon.* Another personage not in the French comedy is Sir Arthur Addell, who is very well drawn; his way of wooing is at least original, and so are the following four lines with which he ends the first act:—

> "As sure, as Chick in Pouche, or . . . in Bosome
> My flames are raging; and who dares oppose 'em?
> They soon shall thaw her Heart, though ne're so Icy;
> Like Julius Caesar, *veni, vidi, vici.*"

The author, however, who ought to be the best judge of the sources from which he borrowed his play, admits his thefts in the epilogue to *Sir Salomon,*—an epilogue which we give below, and of which some of the points are not lost even at the present day.

> Since stealing's grown a pretty thriving Trade,
> Which many Rich, but few has Guilty made;
> To needy Poets, why should you deny
> The Privilege to steal, as well as lie?
> Their Theft (alas) swells not the Nation's Debt,
> Nor makes Wine dear, nor will Land-taxe beget.
> Money they always wanted; Now they grow
> No less in Fancy, then in Fortune, low;
> And are compell'd to rook, as Gamesters are,
> That can hold out no longer on the square.
> Faith, be good natur'd to this hungry Crew,
> Who, what they filch abroad, bring home to you.
> But still exclude those men from all Relief,
> Who steal themselves, yet boldly cry, Stop Thief:

[3] Geneste, "Some Account of the English Stage," 10 vols., 1832, vol. i., p. 107.

Like taking Judges, these without remorse
Condemn all petty Thefts, and practise worse;
As if they robb'd by Patent, and alone
Had right to call each Foreign play their own.
What we have brought before you, was not meant
For a new Play, but a new Precedent;
For me with Modesty our Theft avow,
(There is some Conscience shewn in stealing too)
And openly declare, that if our Cheer
Does hit your Palates, you must thank Molière:
Molière, the famous Shakspear of this Age,
Both when he Writes, and when he treads the Stage.
I hope this Stranger's Praise gives no pretence
To charge us with a National Offence;
Since, were it in my power, I would advance
French Wit in England, English Arms in France.

Mrs Cowley composed, with Caryl's *Sir Salomon* and Molière's *School for Wives* a comedy called *More Ways than One*, produced at Covent Garden Theatre in 1783, in which the only novelty appears to be the character of a rascally doctor, called Barkwell, and a lover, Bellair, who pretends to be dying in order to be near the object of his affection, Arabella, the Agnès of the French play; whilst the part of Sir Maxwell Mushroom is borrowed from Sir Positive in Shadwell's *Sullen Lovers*. The only thing remarkable in this comedy is the high-flown language of the dedication to the author's husband in India, of which we give the beginning—

Hence! Comic Scenes, to where rich Ganges laves
Hindostan's golden shores with hallowed waves,
Where Palms gigantic rear their tufted heads,
And all colossal vegetation spreads,
Where rich Ananas court the Indian's eye,
And Groves of Citrons fan the feverish sky,
Where rattling Canes along the rivulets play,
And the Centennial Aloe conquers day,
In their deep Shades bid Lucidorus' smile
His heavy sense of distant hours beguile.

A collected edition of the works of Mrs Cowley was published in 1813, in three volumes, with a preface, which is really a model of the longest and most latinised words in the English language, with the smallest possible amount of sense.

Edward Ravenscroft (see Introductory Notice to the *Pretentious Young Ladies*, Vol. I., p. 214), has, in *London Cuckolds*, acted at the Duke's Theatre, 1682, partly imitated *The School for Wives*, and given Arnolphe the name of Wiseacre, and Agnès that of Peggy; but the whole play is so filthy that nothing can be quoted from it. Until 1754 it was frequently represented on Lord Mayor's day, in contempt, as it were, of the City.

Isaac Bickerstaffe wrote *Love in the City*, a comic opera, which was

acted at Covent Garden in 1767, but did not meet with much success. The character of Priscilla, an unmanageable Creole girl, is partly taken from Agnès, and that of Barnacle from Chrysalde,—both from *The School for Wives.* Priscilla persuades her lover, young Walter Cockney, that her "love for the captain . . . . . was only a sham," and that if she "can manage it she will go off with him to Scotland to-night, where they say folks may be married in spite of anyone." The characters of Wagg, the attorney, who disguises himself first as a Colonel, and afterwards as Captain Delany from "the county of Mayo," and of Spruce, who appears as a Lord, are partly borrowed from *The Pretentious Young Ladies.* (See Vol. I., page 209.) The arguments of Wagg in Act iii., Scene 2, seem to owe their origin to Gros-René's speech in *Sganarelle or the Self-Deceived Husband* (see Vol. I., page 267), whilst the whole scene appears to be taken from the sixth scene of the second act of Molière's *School for Wives.* We give Bickerstaffe's scene in the Appendix. This play, with the characters of Wagg, Spruce, and Miss Molly Cockney omitted, and cut down to two acts, was brought out as *The Romp,* and met with great success.

PREFACE.

A great many people at first hissed this comedy, but the laughers were for it, and all the ill that was said of it could not hinder its having a success with which I am very well satisfied. I know it is expected from me that I should give some preface in answer to the critics, and in justification of my work. Doubtless I am sufficiently indebted to all those who have given it their approbation, to think myself obliged to defend their judgment against that of others; but a great many of the things I should say on that head are already in a dissertation, which I have written in the form of a dialogue, with which as yet I do not know what I shall do. The idea of this dialogue, or, if you like it better, of this little comedy,[4] came into my head after the first two or three representations of my play. I mentioned this idea one evening at a house where I visited; and immediately a person of quality, whose wit is sufficiently known to the world,[5] and who does me the honour to call me his friend, liked the thought of it so well, that he not only begged me to put my hand to it, but likewise to put his own; and I was amazed that two days afterwards he showed me the whole thing done, in a manner which was indeed better written and more witty than I am able to do it, but which was too flattering for me, so that I was afraid that if I brought that work out in our theatre, I should presently be accused of having begged the praises which were therein bestowed upon me. Yet that hindered me, for some reason, from finishing what I had begun. But so many people daily urge me to write it, that I do not know what will be done; and this uncertainty is the reason I do not put in this preface, what will be seen in the Criticism, in

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[4] This was *The School for Wives criticised*, played the 1st of June 1663.

[5] The Abbé Dubuisson, who was called the *grand introducteur des ruelles* (See Vol. I., page 234, note 25.)

case I resolve to let it appear—which, if it does, I say it again, it will only be to revenge the public for the squeamishness of some people. For my part, I think myself sufficiently revenged by the success of my Comedy, and I wish that all I shall hereafter write may receive the same treatment from them, provided it has the same good fortune elsewhere.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ARNOLPHE,[6] *alias* M. DE LA SOUCHE.
CHRYSALDE, *friend to Arnolphe.*
HORACE, *in love with Agnès.*
ENRIQUE, *brother-in-law of Chrysalde.*
ORONTE, *father to Horace and a great friend of Arnolphe.*
ALAIN, *a country fellow, servant to Arnolphe.*
A NOTARY.

AGNÈS, *a young innocent girl, brought up by Arnolphe.*
GEORGETTE, *a country-woman, servant to Arnolphe.*

Scene—A SQUARE IN A TOWN.

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[6] This part was played by Molière himself.

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES.

(*L' ÉCOLE DES FEMMES.*)

ACT I. SCENE I.

CHRYSALDE, ARNOLPHE.[7]

Ch. You have come to marry her, you say?

Ar. Yes, I mean to settle the business to-morrow.

Ch. We are here alone, and I think we can speak together without fear of being overheard. Do you wish me to open my heart to you like a friend? Your plan makes me tremble with fear for you. To take a wife is a rash step for you, whichever way you consider the matter.

Ar. True, my friend. Possibly you find in your own home reasons why you should fear for me. I fancy that your own forehead shows that horns are everywhere the infallible accompaniment of marriage.

Ch. These are accidents against which we cannot insure ourselves; it seems to me that the trouble people take about this is very ridiculous. But when I fear for you, it is on account of this raillery of which a hundred poor husbands have felt the sting. For you know that neither great nor small have been safe from your criticism; that your greatest pleasure, wherever you are, is to make a mighty outcry about secret intrigues . . .

Ar. Exactly. Is there another city in the world where

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[7] See Appendix, Note A.

husbands are so patient as here? Do we not meet with them in every variety, and well provided with everything? One heaps up wealth, which his wife shares with those who are eager to make him a dupe; another, slightly more fortunate, but not less infamous, sees his wife receive presents day after day, and is not troubled in mind by any jealous twinge when she tells him that they are the rewards of virtue. One makes a great noise, which does him not the slightest good; another lets matters take their course in all meekness, and, seeing the gallant arrive at his house, very politely takes up his gloves and his cloak. One married woman cunningly pretends to make a confidant of her confiding husband, who slumbers securely under such a delusion, and pities the gallant for his pains, which, however, the latter does not throw away. Another married woman, to account for her extravagance, says that the money she spends has been won at play; and the silly husband, without considering at what play, thanks Heaven for her winnings. In short, we find subjects for satire everywhere, and may I, as a spectator, not laugh at them? Are not these fools . . .

Ch. Yes; but he who laughs at another must beware, lest he in turn be laughed at himself. I hear what is said, and how some folks delight in retailing what goes on; but no one has seen me exult at reports, which are bruited about in the places I frequent. I am rather reserved in this respect; and, though I might condemn a certain toleration of these matters, and am resolved by no means to suffer quietly what some husbands endure, yet I have never affected to say so: for, after all, satire may fall upon ourselves, and we should never vow in such cases what we should or should not do. Thus, if by an overruling fate some natural disgrace should ever happen to my brow, I am almost sure, after the way in which I have acted, that

people would be content to laugh at it in their sleeve; and possibly, in addition, I may reap this advantage, that a few good fellows will say "What a pity!" But with you, my dear friend, it is otherwise. I tell you again you are running a plaguy risk. As your tongue has always persistently bantered husbands accused of being tolerant; as you have shown yourself like a demon let loose upon them, you must walk straight for fear of being made a laughing-stock; and, if it happens that they get the least pretext, take care they do not publish your disgrace at the public market-cross, and . . .

Ar. Good Heaven, friend, do not trouble yourself. He will be a clever man who catches me in this way. I know all the cunning tricks and subtle devices which women use to deceive us, and how one is fooled by their dexterity, and I have taken precautions against this mischance. She whom I am marrying possesses all the innocence which may protect my forehead from evil influence.

Ch. Why, what do you imagine? That a silly girl, to be brief . . .

Ar. To marry a silly girl is not to become silly myself. I believe, as a good Christian, that your better half is very wise; but a clever wife is ominous, and I know what some people have to pay for choosing theirs with too much talent. What, I go and saddle myself with an intellectual woman, who talks of nothing but of her assembly and *ruelle*[8]; who writes tender things in prose and in verse, and is visited by Marquises and wits, whilst, as "Mrs So-and-so's husband," I should be like a saint, whom no one calls upon! No, no, I will have none of your lofty minds. A woman who writes knows more than she ought to do. I intend that my wife shall not even be clever enough to know what a rhyme is.

[8] See Vol. I., page 234, note 25.

If one plays at *corbillon* with her, and asks her in her turn "What is put into the basket," I will have her answer, "A cream tart."[9] In a word, let her be very ignorant; and to tell you the plain truth, it is enough for her that she can say her prayers, love me, sew and spin.

Ch. A stupid wife, then, is your fancy?

Ar. So much so that I should prefer a very stupid and ugly woman to a very beautiful one with a great deal of wit.

Ch. Wit and beauty . . .

Ar. Virtue is quite enough.

Ch. But how can you expect, after all, that a mere simpleton can ever know what it is to be virtuous? Besides, to my mind, it must be very wearisome for a man to have a stupid creature perpetually with him. Do you think you act rightly, and that, by reliance on your plan, a man's brow is saved from danger? A woman of sense may fail in her duty; but she must at least do so knowingly; a stupid woman may at any time fail in hers, without desiring or thinking of it.

Ar. To this fine argument, this deep discourse, I reply as Pantagruel did to Panurge: Urge me to marry any other woman than a stupid one; preach and lecture till Whitsuntide, you shall be amazed to find, when you have done, that you have not persuaded me in the very slightest.[10]

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[9] In France there was, and may be still, a kind of round game which consists in replying with a word ending in *on* to the question, *Que met on dans mon corbillon?*—(what is put into my little basket?) The supposed answer of Agnès, "A cream tart," though it does not rhyme with *corbillon*, may come natural enough, because the *corbillon* was a kind of basket in which pastry-cooks took home pastry to their customers.

[10] In the fifth chapter of the third book of Rabelais' *Pantagruel: How Pantagruel altogether abhorreth the debtors and borrowers*, we find: "I understand you very well, quoth Pantagruel, and take you to be very good at topics, and thoroughly affectioned to your own cause. But

Ch. I do not want to say another word.

Ar. Every man has his own way. With my wife, as in everything, I mean to follow my fashion. I think I am rich enough to take a partner who shall owe all to me, and whose humble station and complete dependence cannot reproach me either with her property or her birth. A sweet and staid look made me love Agnès, amongst other children, when she was only four. It came into my mind to ask her from her mother, who was very poor; the good country-woman, learning my wish, was delighted to rid herself of the charge. I had her brought up, according to my own notions, in a little solitary convent; that is to say, directing them what means to adopt in order to make her as idiotic as possible. Thank Heaven, success has crowned my efforts; and I am very thankful to say, I have found her so innocent that I have blessed Heaven for having done what I wished, in giving me a wife according to my desire. Then I brought her away; and as my house is continually open to a hundred different people, and as we must be on our guard against everything, I have kept her in another house where no one comes to see me; and where her good disposition cannot be spoiled as she meets none but people as simple as herself. You will say, "Wherefore this long story?" It is to let you see the care I have taken. To crown all, and as you are a trusty friend, I ask you to sup with her to-night. I wish you would examine her a little, and see if I am to be condemned for my choice.

Ch. With all my heart.

Ar. You can judge of her looks and her innocence when you converse with her.

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preach it up and patrocinate it, prattle on it, and defend it as much as you will, even from hence to the next Whitsuntide, if you please so to do, yet in the end will you be astonished to find how you shall have gained no ground at all upon me, nor persuaded me . . . never so little."

Ch. As to that, what you have told me cannot . . .

Ar. What I have told you falls even short of the truth: I admire her simplicity on all occasions; sometimes she says things at which I split my sides with laughing. The other day—would you believe it?—she was uneasy, and came to ask me, with unexampled innocence, if children came through the ears.

Ch. I greatly rejoice, Mr Arnolphe . . .

Ar. What! will you always call me by that name?

Ch. Ah, it comes to my lips in spite of me; I never remember Mr de la Souche. Who on earth has put it into your head to change your name at forty-two years of age, and give yourself a title from a rotten old tree on your farm?

Ar. Besides that the house is known by that name, la Souche pleases my ear better than Arnolphe.[11]

Ch. What a pity to give up the genuine name of one's fathers, and take one based on chimeras! Most people have an itching that way, and, without including you in the comparison, I knew a country-fellow called Gros-Pierre, who, having no other property but a rood of land, had a muddy ditch made all round it, and took the high-sounding name of M. de l'Isle.[12]

Ar. You might dispense with such examples. But, at all events, de la Souche is the name I bear. I have a reason for it, I like it; and to call me otherwise is to annoy me.

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[11] Arnulphus was in the middle ages considered the patron-saint of deceived husbands; this belief was not wholly forgotten in the seventeenth century: hence the dislike of Arnolphe to his name.

[12] Some contemporaries of Molière imagined he alluded to Thomas Corneille, or to Charles Sorel, the author of *Francion*, who, it is said, had both adopted the name of M. de l'Isle.—As Mr Big Peter (*Gros-Pierre*) had made of his rood of land a kind of island, he thought he had a right to call himself after an isle.

Ch. Most people find it hard to fall in with it; I even yet see letters addressed . . .

Ar. I endure it easily from those who are not informed; but you . . .

Ch. Be it so; we will make no difficulty about that; I will take care to accustom my lips to call you nothing else than M. de la Souche.

Ar. Farewell. I am going to knock here, to wish them good morning, and simply to say that I have come back.

Ch. [*Aside*] Upon my word, I think he is a perfect fool.

Ar. [*Alone*] He is a little touched on certain points. Strange, to see how each man is passionately fond of his own opinion. [*Knocks at his door*] Hulloa!

SCENE II.

ARNOLPHE, ALAIN, GEORGETTE, *within.*[13]

Al. Who knocks?

Ar. Open the door! [*Aside*] I think they will be very glad to see me after ten days' absence.

Al. Who is there?

Ar. I.

Al. Georgette!

Geo. Well!

Al. Open the door there!

Geo. Go, and do it yourself!

Al. You go and do it.

Geo. Indeed, I shall not go.

Al. No more shall I.

Ar. Fine compliments, whilst I am left without. Hulloa! Here, please.

Geo. Who knocks?

[13] See Appendix, Note B.

Ar. Your master.

Geo. Alain!

Al. What?

Geo. It is the master. Open the door quickly.

Al. Open it yourself.

Geo. I am blowing the fire.

Al. I am taking care that the sparrow does not go out, for fear of the cat.

Ar. Whoever of you two does not open the door shall have no food for four days. Ah!

Geo. Why do you come when I was running?

Al. Why should you more than I? A pretty trick, indeed!

Geo. Stand out of the way,

Al. Stand out of the way yourself.

Geo. I wish to open the door.

Al. And so do I.

Geo. You shall not.

Al. No more shall you.

Geo. Nor you.

Ar. I need have patience here.

Al. [*Entering*] There; it is I, master.

Geo. [*Entering*] Your servant; it is I.

Al. If it were not out of respect for master here, I . . .

Ar. [*Receiving a push from Alain*] Hang it!

Al. Pardon me.

Ar. Look at the lout!

Al. It was she also, master . . . .

Ar. Hold your tongues, both of you. Just answer me and let us have no more fooling. Well, Alain, how is every one here?

Al. Master, we . . . [*Arnolphe takes off Alain's hat*] Master, we . . . [*Arnolphe takes it off again*] Thank Heaven, we . . .

Ar. [*Taking off the hat a third time, and flinging it to the ground*] Who taught you, impertinent fool, to speak to me with your hat on your head ?

Al. You are right; I am wrong.

Ar. [*To Al.*] Ask Agnès to come down.[14]

SCENE III.

ARNOLPHE, GEORGETTE.

Ar. Was she sad after I went away ?

Geo. Sad ? No.

Ar. No ?

Geo. Yes, yes.

Ar. Why, then ?

Geo. May I die on the spot, but she expected you return every minute; and we never heard a cock, ass, or a mule pass by without her thinking it was

SCENE IV.

ARNOLPHE, AGNÈS, ALAIN, GEORGETTE.[15]

Ar. Work in hand ? That is a good sign. Well, Agnès, I have returned. Are you glad of it ?

Ag. Yes sir, Heaven be thanked.

Ar. I too am glad to see you again. You have always been well ? I see you have.

Ag. Except for the fleas, which troubled me in the night.

Ar. Ah, you shall soon have some one to drive them away.

Ag. I shall be pleased with that.

Ar. I can easily imagine it. What are you doing there ?

Ag. I am making myself some caps. Your night-shirts and caps are finished.

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[14] See Appendix, Note C. [15] See Appendix, Note D.

r. Ah, that is all right. Well, go up stairs. Do not ourself. I will soon return, and talk to you of im- matters.

SCENE V.

ARNOLPHE, *alone.*

f the day, learned ladies, who spout tender iments, I defy in a breath all your verses, your letters, your love-letters, your entire science, to much as this virtuous and modest ignorance. ot be dazzled by riches; and so long as honour

SCENE VI.

HORACE, ARNOLPHE. [16]

What do I see? Is it . . . Yes. I am mistaken. No; it is himself. Hor . . .

r. Mr Arn . . .

Ir. Horace.

Hor. Arnolphe.

Ar. Ah! what joy indeed! And how long have you been here?

Hor. Nine days.

Ar. Really.

Hor. I went straight to your house, but in vain.

Ar. I was in the country.

Hor. Yes, you had been gone ten days.

Ar. Oh, how these children spring up in a few years! I am amazed to see him so tall, after having known him no higher than that.

Hor. You see how it is.

Ar. But tell me how is Oronte, your father, my good

[16] See Appendix, Note E.

and dear friend, whom I esteem and revere? What is he doing? What is he saying? Is he still hearty? He knows I am interested in all that affects him: we have not seen one another these four years, nor, what is more, written to each other, I think.

Hor. Mr Arnolphe, he is still more cheerful than ourselves; I had a letter from him for you. But he has since informed me in another letter, that he is coming here, though as yet I do not know the reason for it. Can you tell me which of your townsmen has returned with abundance of wealth earned during a fourteen years' residence in America?

Ar. No. Have you not heard his name?

Hor. Enrique.

Ar. No.

Hor. My father speaks of him and his return, as though he should be well known to me; he writes that they are about to set out together, on an affair of consequence, of which his letter says nothing. [*Gives Oronte's letter to Arnolphe.*

Ar. I shall assuredly be very glad to see him, and shall do my best to entertain him. [*After reading the letter*] Friends do not need to send such polite letters, and all these compliments are unnecessary. Even if he had not taken the trouble to write one word, you might have freely disposed of all I have.

Hor. I am a man who takes people at their word; and I have present need of a hundred pistoles.

Ar. Upon my word, you oblige me by using me thus. I rejoice that I have them with me. Keep the purse too.

Hor. I must . . . .

Ar. Drop this ceremony. Well, how do you like this town so far?

Hor. Its inhabitants are numerous, its buildings

splendid, and I should think that its amusements are wonderful.

Ar. Every one has his own pleasures, after his own fashion; but for those whom we christen our gallants, they have in this town just what pleases them, for the women are born flirts. Dark and fair are amiably disposed, and the husbands also are the most kind in the world. It is a pleasure fit for a King; to me it is a mere comedy to see the pranks I do. Perhaps you have already smitten some one. Have you had no adventure yet? Men of your figure can do more than men who have money, and you are cut out to make cuckolds.

Hor. Not to deceive you as to the simple truth, I have had a certain love-passage in these parts, and friendship compels me to tell you of it.

Ar. [*Aside*] Good. Here is another queer story to set down in my pocket-book.

Hor. But pray, let these things be secret.

Ar. Oh!

Hor. You know that in these matters a secret divulged destroys our expectations. I will then frankly confess to you that my heart has been smitten in this place by a certain fair maid. My little attentions were at once so successful that I obtained a pleasant introduction to her; not to boast too much, nor to do her an injustice, affairs go very well with me.

Ar. [*Laughing*] Ha! ha! And she is . . .

Hor. [*Pointing to the house of Agnès*] A young creature living in yonder house, of which you can see the red walls from this. Simple, of a truth, through the matchless folly of a man who hides her from all the world; but who, amidst the ignorance in which he would enslave her, discloses charms that throw one into raptures, as well as a thoroughly engaging manner, and something indescribably tender, against which no heart is proof. But perhaps you

have seen this young star of love, adorned by so many charms. Agnès is her name.

Ar. [*Aside*] Oh, I shall burst with rage!

Hor. As for the man, I think his name is De la Zousse, or Souche; I did not much concern myself about the name. He is rich, by what they told me, but not one of the wisest of men; they say he is a ridiculous fellow. Do you not know him?

Ar. [*Aside*] It is a bitter pill I have to swallow!

Hor. Why, you do not speak a word.

Ar. Oh yes . . . I know him.

Hor. He is a fool, is he not?

Ar. Ugh!

Hor. What do you say? Ugh!—that means yes? Jealous, I suppose, ridiculously so? Stupid? I see he is just as they told me. To be brief, the lovely Agnès has succeeded in enslaving me. She is a pretty jewel, to tell you honestly; it would be a sin if such a rare beauty were left in the power of this eccentric fellow. For me, all my efforts, all my dearest wishes, are to make her mine in spite of this jealous wretch; and the money which I so freely borrow of you, was only to bring this laudable enterprise to a conclusion. You know better than I, that, whatever we undertake, money is the master key to all great plans, and that this sweet metal, which distracts so many, promotes our triumphs, in love as in war. You seem vexed? Can it be that you disapprove of my design?

Ar. No; but I was thinking . . .

Hor. This conversation wearies you? Farewell. I will soon pay you a visit to return thanks.

Ar. [*Thinking himself alone*] What! must it . . .

Hor. [*Returning*] Once again, pray be discreet; do not go and spread my secret abroad.

Ar. [*Thinking himself alone*] I feel within my soul . . .

Hor. [*Returning again*] And above all to my father, who would perhaps get enraged, if he knew of it.

Ar. [*Expecting Horace to return again*] Oh! . . . [17]

SCENE VII.

ARNOLPHE, *alone.*

Oh, what I have endured during this conversation! Never was trouble of mind equal to mine! With what rashness and extreme haste did he come to tell me of this affair! Though my second name keeps him at fault, did ever any blunderer run on so furiously? But, having endured so much, I ought to have refrained until I had learned that which I have reason to fear, to have drawn out his foolish chattering to the end, and ascertained their secret understanding completely. Let me try to overtake him; I fancy he is not far-off. Let me worm from him the whole mystery. I tremble for the misfortune which may befal me; for we often seek more than we wish to find.

ACT II. SCENE I.

ARNOLPHE, *alone.*

It is no doubt well, when I think of it, that I have lost my way, and failed to find him; for after all, I should not have been able entirely to conceal from his eyes the overwhelming pang of my heart. The grief that preys upon me would have broken forth, and I do not wish him to know what he is at present ignorant of. But I am not the man to put up with this, and leave a free field for this young spark to pursue his design. I am resolved to check his

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[17] See Appendix, Note F.

progress, and learn, without delay, how far they understand each other. My honour is specially involved in this. I regard her already as my wife. She cannot have made a slip without covering me with shame; and whatever she does will be placed to my account. Fatal absence! Unfortunate voyage! [*Knocks at his door.*

SCENE II.

ARNOLPHE, ALAIN, GEORGETTE.

Al. Ah, master, this time . . .

Ar. Peace. Come here, both of you. That way, that way. Come along, come, I tell you.

Geo. Ah, you frighten me; all my blood runs cold.

Ar. Is it thus you have obeyed me in my absence? You have both combined to betray me!

Geo. [*Falling at Arnolphe's feet*] Oh master, do not eat me, I implore you.

Al. [*Aside*] I am sure some mad dog has bitten him.

Ar. [*Aside*] Ugh, I cannot speak, I am so filled with rage. I am choking, and should like to throw off my clothes. . . . [*To Alain and Georgette*] You cursed scoundrels, you have permitted a man to come . . . [*To Alain, who tries to escape*] You would run away, would you! You must this instant . . . [*To Georgette*] If you move . . . Now I wish you to tell me . . . [*To Alain*] Hi! . . . Yes, I wish you both . . . [*Alain and Georgette rise, and again try to escape*] . . . Whoever of you moves, upon my word, I shall knock him down. How came that man into my house? Now speak. Make haste, quick, directly, instantly, no thinking! Will you speak?

Both. Oh, oh!

Geo. [*Falling at his knees*] My heart fails me!

Al. [*Falling at his knees*] I am dying.

Arn. [*Aside*] I perspire all over. Let me take a

breath. I must fan myself, and walk about. Could I believe, when I saw Horace as a little boy, that he would grow up for this? Heaven, how I suffer! I think it would be better that I should gently draw from Agnès' own mouth an account of what touches me so. Let me try to moderate my anger. Patience, my heart; softly, softly. [*To Alain and Georgette*] Rise, go in, and bid Agnès come to me . . . Stay. Her surprise would be less. They will go and tell her how uneasy I am. I will go myself and bring her out. [*To Alain and Georgette*] Wait for me here.

SCENE III.

ALAIN, GEORGETTE.

Geo. Heavens, how terrible he is! His looks made me afraid—horribly afraid. Never did I see a more hideous Christian.

Al. This gentleman has vexed him; I told you so.

Geo. But what on earth is the reason that he so strictly makes us keep our mistress in the house? Why does he wish to hide her from all the world, and cannot bear to see any one approach her?

Al. Because that makes him jealous.

Geo. But how has he got such a fancy into his head?

Al. Because . . . because he is jealous.

Geo. Yes; but wherefore is he so? and why this anger?

Al. Because jealousy . . . understand me, Georgette, jealousy is a thing . . . a thing . . . which makes people uneasy . . . and which drives folk all round the house. I am going to give you an example, so that you may understand the thing better. Tell me, is it not true that, when you have your broth in your hand, and some hungry person comes up to eat it, you would be in a rage, and be ready to beat him?

Geo. Yes, I understand that.

Al. It is just the same. Woman is in fact the broth of man; and when a man sees other folks sometimes, trying to dip their fingers in his broth, he soon displays extreme anger at it.

Geo. Yes; but why does not every one do the same? Why do we see some who appear to be pleased when their wives are with handsome fine gentlemen?

Al. Because every one has not the greedy love which will give nothing away.

Geo. If I am not blind, I see him returning.

Al. Your eyes are good; it is he.

Geo. See how vexed he is.

Al. That is because he is in trouble.

SCENE IV.

ARNOLPHE, ALAIN, GEORGETTE.

Ar. [*Aside*] A certain Greek told the Emperor Augustus, as an axiom as useful as it was true, that when any accident puts us in a rage, we should, first of all, repeat the alphabet; so that in the interval our anger may abate, and we may do nothing that we ought not to do.[18] I have followed his advice in the matter of Agnès; and I have brought her here designedly, under pretence of taking a walk, so that the suspicions of my disordered mind may cunningly lead her to the topic, and, by sounding her heart, gently find out the truth.

[18] The story is in Plutarch, and is told of Athenodorus from Tarsus and Augustus; only the stoic philosopher advised the Roman emperor never to undertake anything until he had said twenty-four letters to himself. The emperor was so grateful for this advice that he kept Athenodorus another year, and at last dismissed him with a rich reward, quoting a line from Simonides, imitated by Horace in the second ode of the third book: There is a certain reward even for silence.

SCENE V.

ARNOLPHE, AGNÈS, ALAIN, GEORGETTE.

Ar. Come, Agnès. [*To Alain and Georgette*] Get you in.

SCENE VI.

ARNOLPHE, AGNÈS.[19]

Ar. This is a nice walk.

Ag. Very nice.

Ar. What a fine day.

Ag. Very fine.

Ar. What news?

Ag. The kitten is dead.

Ar. Pity? But what then? We are all mortal, and every one is for himself. Did it rain when I was in the country?

Ag. No.

Ar. Were you not wearied?

Ag. I am never wearied.

Ar. What did you do then, these nine or ten days?

Ag. Six shirts, I think, and six nightcaps also.

Ar. [*After musing*] The world, dear Agnès, is a strange place. Observe the scandal, and how everybody gossips. Some of the neighbours have told me that an unknown young man came to the house in my absence; that you permitted him to see and talk to you. But I did not believe these slandering tongues, and I offered to bet that it was false . . .

Ag. Oh, Heaven, do not bet; you would assuredly lose.

Ar. What! It is true that a man . . .

Ag. Quite true. I declare to you that he was scarcely ever out of the house.

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[19] See Appendix, Note G.

Ar. [*Aside*] This confession, so candidly made, at least assures me of her simplicity. [*Aloud*] But I think, Agnès, if my memory is clear, that I forbade you to see any one.

Ag. Yes; but you do not know why I saw him; you would doubtless have done as much.

Ar. Possibly; but tell me then how it was.

Ag. It is very wonderful, and hard to believe. I was on the balcony, working in the open air, when I saw a handsome young man passing close to me under the trees, who, seeing me look at him, immediately bowed very respectfully. I, not to be rude, made him a curtsey. Suddenly he made another bow; I quickly made another curtsey; and when he repeated it for the third time, I answered it directly with a third curtsey. He went on, returned, went past again, and each time made me another bow. And I, who was looking earnestly at all these acts of politeness, returned him as many curtseys; so that if night had not fallen just then, I should have kept on continually in that way; not wishing to yield, and have the vexation of his thinking me less civil than himself.

Ar. Very good.

Ag. Next day, being at the door, an old woman accosted me, and said to me something like this: "My child, may good heaven bless you, and keep you long in all your beauty. It did not make you such a lovely creature to abuse its gifts; you must know that you have wounded a heart which to-day is driven to complain."

Ar. [*Aside*] Oh, tool of Satan! damnable wretch!

Ag. "Have I wounded anyone?" I answered, quite astonished. "Yes," she said, "wounded; you have indeed wounded a gentleman. It is him you saw yesterday from the balcony." "Alas!" said I, "what could have been the cause? Did I, without thinking, let anything fall on him?" "No," replied she; "it was your eyes, which gave the fatal

blow; from their glances came all his injury." "Alas! good Heaven," said I, "I am more than ever surprised. Do my eyes contain something bad, that they can give it to other people?" "Yes," cried she, "your eyes, my girl, have a poison to hurt withal, of which you know nothing. In a word, the poor fellow pines away; and if," continued the charitable old woman, "your cruelty refuses him assistance, it is likely he shall be carried to his grave in a couple of days." "Bless me!" said I, "I would be very sorry for that; but what assistance does he require of me?" "My child," said she, "he requests only the happiness of seeing and conversing with you. Your eyes alone can prevent his ruin, and cure the disease they have caused." "Oh! gladly," said I; "and, since it is so, he may come to see me here as often as he likes."

Ar. [*Aside*] O cursed witch! poisoner of souls! may hell reward your charitable tricks!

Ag. That is how he came to see me, and got cured. Now tell me, frankly, if I was not right? And could I, after all, have the conscience to let him die for lack of aid? —I, who feel so much pity for suffering people, and cannot see a chicken die without weeping!

Ar. [*Aside*] All this comes only from an innocent soul; I blame my imprudent absence for it, which left this kindliness of heart without a protector, exposed to the wiles of artful seducers. I fear that the rascal, in his bold passion, has carried the matter somewhat beyond a joke.

Ag. What ails you? I think you are a little angry. Was there anything wrong in what I have told you?

Ar. No. But tell me what followed, and how the young man behaved during his visits.

Ag. Alas! if you but knew how delighted he was; how he got rid of his illness as soon as I saw him, the present he

made me of a lovely casket, and the money which Alain and Georgette have had from him, you would no doubt love him, and say, as we say . . .

Ar. Yes. But what did he do when he was alone with you?

Ag. He swore that he loved me with an unequalled passion, and said the prettiest words possible, things that nothing ever can equal, the sweetness of which charms me whenever I hear him speak, and moves I know not what within me.

Ar. [*Aside*] Oh! sad inquiry into a fatal mystery, in which the inquirer alone suffers all the pain. [*Aloud*] Besides all these speeches, all these pretty compliments, did he not also bestow a few caresses on you?

Ag. Oh, so many! He took my hands and my arms, and was never tired of kissing them.

Ar. Agnès, did he take nothing else from you? [*Seeing her confused*] Ugh!

Ag. Why, he .

Ar. What?

Ag. Took . . .

Ar. Ugh!

Ag. The . . .

Ar. Well?

Ag. I dare not tell you; you will perhaps be angry with me.

Ar. No.

Ag. Yes, but you will.

Ar. Good Heavens! no.

Ag. Swear on your word.

Ar. On my word, then.

Ag. He took my . . . You will be in a passion.

Ar. No.

Ag. Yes.

Ar. No, no, no, no! What the devil is this mystery? What did he take from you?

Ag. He . . .

Ar. [*Aside*] I am suffering the torments of the damned.

Ag. He took away from me the ribbon you gave me. To tell you the truth, I could not prevent him.

Ar. [*Drawing his breath*] Oh! let the ribbon go. But I want to know if he did nothing to you but kiss your arms.

Ag. Why! do people do other things?

Ar. Not at all. But, to cure the disorder which he said had seized him, did he not ask you for any other remedy?

Ag. No. You may judge that I would have granted him anything to do him good, if he had asked for it.

Ar. [*Aside*] By the kindness of Heaven, I am cheaply out of it! May I be blessed if I fall into such a mistake again! [*Aloud*] Pooh! That is the result of your innocence, Agnès. I shall say no more about it. What is done is done. I know that, by flattering you, the gallant only wishes to deceive you, and to laugh at you afterwards.

Ag. Oh, no! He told me so more than a score of times.

Ar. Ah! you do not know that he is not to be believed. But, now, learn that to accept caskets, and to listen to the nonsense of these handsome fops,[20] to allow them languidly to kiss your hands and charm your heart, is a mortal sin, and one of the greatest that can be committed.

Ag. A sin, do you say? And why, pray?

Ar. Why? The reason is the absolute law that Heaven is incensed by such doings.

Ag. Incensed! But why should it be incensed? Ah, it is so sweet and agreeable! How strange is the joy one feels from all this; up to this time I was ignorant of these things.

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[20] The original has *beaux blondins*. See page 12, note 8.

Ar. Yes, all these tender passages, these pretty speeches and sweet caresses, are a great pleasure; but they must be enjoyed in an honest manner, and their sin should be taken away by marriage.

Ag. Is it no longer a sin when one is married?

Ar. No.

Ag. Then please marry me quickly.

Ar. If you wish it, I wish it also; I have returned hither for the purpose of marrying you.

Ag. Is that possible?

Ar. Yes.

Ag. How happy you will make me!

Ar. Yes, I have no doubt that marriage will please you.

Ag. Then we two shall . . . .

Ar. Nothing is more certain.

Ag. How I shall caress you, if this comes to pass.

Ar. Ha! And I shall do the same to you.

Ag. I can never tell when people are jesting. Do you speak seriously?

Ar. Yes, you might see that I do.

Ag. We are to be married?

Ar. Yes.

Ag. But when?

Ar. This very evening.

Ag. [*Laughing*] This very evening?

Ar. This very evening. Does that make you laugh?

Ag. Yes.

Ar. To see you happy is my desire.

Ag. Oh, how greatly I am obliged to you, and what satisfaction I shall have with him!

Ar. With whom?

Ag. With . . . . him there . . . .

Ar. Him there! I am not speaking of him there. You are a little quick in selecting a husband. In a word,

it is some one else whom I have ready for you. And as for that gentleman, I require, by your leave (though the illness of which he accuses you should be the death of him). that henceforth you break off all intercourse with him, that, when he comes to the house, you will, by way of compliment, just shut the door in his face; throw a stone out of the window at him when he knocks, and oblige him in good earnest never to appear again. Do you hear me, Agnès? I shall observe your behaviour, concealed in a recess.

Ag. Oh dear, he is so handsome! He is . . . .

Ar. Ha! How you are talking!

Ag. I shall not have the heart . . . .

Ar. No more chatter. Go upstairs.

Ag. But surely! Will you . . . .

Ar. Enough. I am master; I command; do you go and obey.[21]

ACT III. SCENE I.

ARNOLPHE, AGNÈS, ALAIN, GEORGETTE.

Ar. Yes, all has gone well; my joy is extreme. You have obeyed my orders to perfection, and brought the fair seducer[22] to utter confusion. See what it is to have a wise counsellor. Your innocence, Agnès, had been betrayed; look what you had been brought to, before you had been aware of it. You were treading, deprived of my warnings, right-down the broad path to hell and perdition. The ways of all these young fops are but too well known. They have their fine rolls,[23] plenty of ribbons and plumes,

[21] See Appendix, Note H.

[22] The original has *blondin séducteur*. See page 112, note 8.

[23] See Vol. I., pages 232 and 240, notes 23 and 33.

big wigs, good teeth, a smooth address; but I tell you they have the cloven foot, beneath; and they are very devils, whose corrupt appetites try to prey upon the honour of women. This time, however, thanks to the care that has been taken, you have escaped with your virtue. The style in which I saw you throw that stone at him, which has dashed the hopes of all his plans, still more determines me not to delay the marriage for which I told you to prepare. But, before all, it is well I should speak a few words with you which may be salutary. [*To Georgette and Alain*] Bring out a chair in the open air. As for you, if you ever . . . .

Geo. We shall take care to remember all your instructions. That other gentleman imposed on us, but . . . .

Al. If he ever gets in here, may I never drink another drop. Besides he is a fool. He gave us two gold crowns the other day, which were under weight.[24]

Ar. Well, get what I ordered for supper; and as to the contract I spoke of, let one of you fetch the notary who lives at the corner of the market-place.

SCENE II.

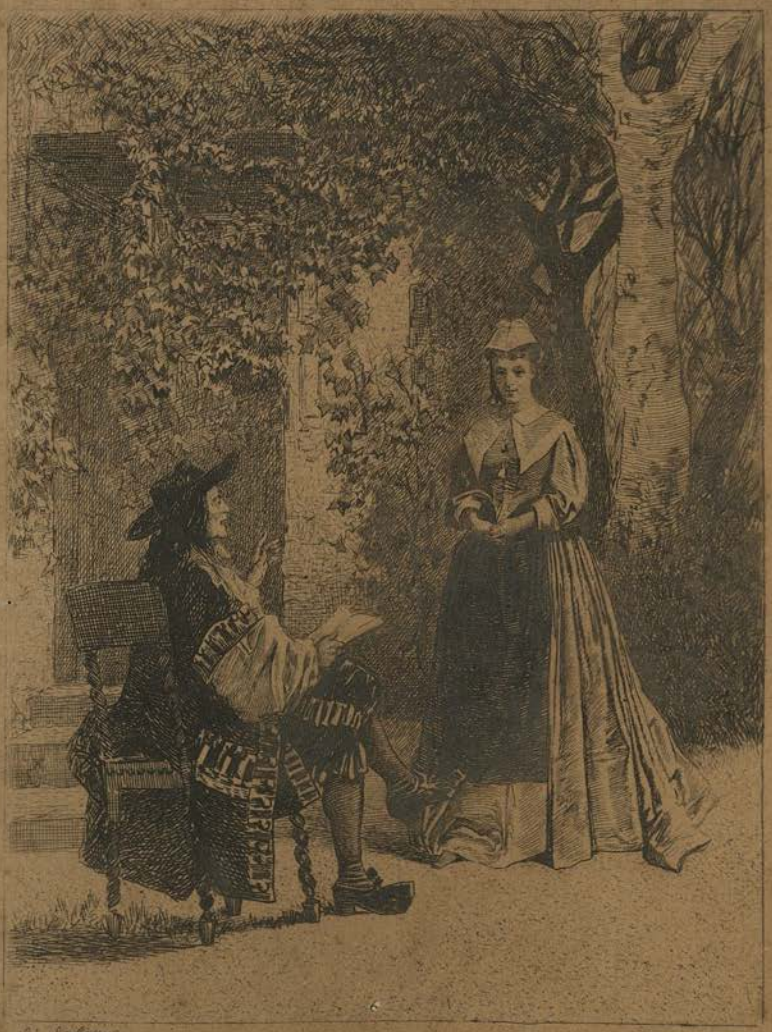
ARNOLPHE, AGNÈS.[25]

Ar. [*Seated*] Agnès, put your work down, and listen to me. Raise your head a little, and turn your face round. [*Putting his finger on his forehead*] There, look at me here while I speak, and take good note of even the smallest word. I am going to wed you, Agnès; you ought to bless your stars a hundred times a day, to think of your former

[24] The clipping of coin was very common at that time. The golden crown was then worth five livres four sous, and would be now of the value of ten francs and a-half.

[25] See Appendix, Note I.

low estate, and, at the same time, to wonder at my goodness in raising you from a poor country girl to the honourable rank of a citizen's wife; to enjoy the bed and the embraces of a man who has shunned all such trammels, and whose heart has refused to a score of women, well fitted to please, the honour which he intends to confer on you. You must always keep in mind, I say, how insignificant you would be without this glorious alliance, in order that the picture may teach you the better to merit the condition in which I shall place you, and make you always know yourself, so that I may never repent of what I am doing. Marriage, Agnès, is no joke. The position of a wife calls for strict duties; I do not mean to exalt you to that condition, in order that you may be free and take your ease. Your sex is formed for dependence. Omnipotence goes with the beard. Though there are two halves in the connection, yet these two halves are by no means equal. The one half is supreme, the other subordinate: the one is all submission to the other which rules; the obedience which the well-disciplined soldier shows to his leader, the servant to his master, a child to his parent, the lowest monk to his superior, is far below the docility, obedience, humility, and profound respect due from the wife to her husband, her chief, her lord, and her master. When he looks at her gravely, her duty is at once to lower her eyes, never daring to look him in the face, until he chooses to favour her with a tender glance. Our women now-a-days do not understand this; but do not be spoiled by the example of others. Take care not to intimate those miserable flirts whose pranks are talked of all over the city; and do not let the evil one tempt you, that is, do not listen to any young coxcomb. Remember, Agnès, that, in making you part of myself, I give my honour into your hands, which honour is fragile and easily damaged; that it will not do to trifle in such a



matter, and that there are boiling cauldrons in hell, into which wives who live wickedly are thrown for evermore. I am not telling you a parcel of stories; you ought to let these lessons sink into your heart. If you practise them sincerely, and take care not to flirt, your soul will ever be white and spotless as a lily; but if you stain your honour, it will become as black as coal. You will seem hideous to all, and one day you will become the devil's own property, and boil in hell to all eternity—from which may the goodness of Heaven defend you! Make a curtsey. As a novice in a convent ought to know her duties by heart, so it ought to be on getting married: here in my pocket I have an important document which will teach you the duty of a wife. I do not know the author, but it is some good soul or other; and I desire that this shall be your only study. [*Rises*] Stay. Let me see if you can read it fairly.

Ag. [*Reads*] "*The Maxims of Marriage; or the Duties of a Wife; together with her Daily Exercise.*

"*First Maxim.*

"She who is honourably wed should remember, notwithstanding the fashion now-a-days, that the man who marries does not take a wife for anyone but himself."

Ar. I shall explain what that means, but at present let us only read.

Ag. [*Continues*]—

"*Second Maxim.*

"She ought not to bedeck herself more than her husband likes. The care of her beauty concerns him alone; and if others think her plain, that must go for nothing.

"*Third Maxim.*

"Far from her be the study of ogling, washes, paints, pomatums, and the thousand preparations for a good com-

plexion. These are ever fatal poisons to honour; and the pains bestowed to look beautiful are seldom taken for a husband.

"*Fourth Maxim.*

"When she goes out, she should conceal the glances of her eyes beneath her hood, as honour requires; for in order to please her husband rightly, she should please none else.

"*Fifth Maxim.*

"It is fit that she receive none but those who visit her husband. The gallants that have no business but with the wife, are not agreeable to the husband.

"*Sixth Maxim.*

"She must firmly refuse presents from men, for in these days nothing is given for nothing.

"*Seventh Maxim.*

"Amongst her furniture, however she dislike it, there must be neither writing-desk, ink, paper, nor pens. According to all good rules, everything written in the house should be written by the husband.

"*Eighth Maxim.*

"Those disorderly meetings, called social gatherings, ever corrupt the minds of women. It is good policy to forbid them; for there they conspire against the poor husbands.

"*Ninth Maxim.*

"Every woman who wishes to preserve her honour should abstain from gambling as a plague; for play is very seductive, and often drives a woman to put down her last stake.

"*Tenth Maxim.*

"She must not venture on public promenades nor picnics; for wise men are of opinion that it is always the husband who pays for such treats.

"*Eleventh Maxim.* . .

Ar. You shall finish it by yourself; and, by and by, I shall explain these things to you properly, word for word. I bethink myself of an engagement. I have but one word to say, and I shall not stay long. Go in again, and take special care of this volume. If the notary comes, let him wait for me a short time.

SCENE III.

ARNOLPHE, *alone.*

I cannot do better than make her my wife. I shall be able to mould her as I please; she is like a bit of wax in my hands, and I can give her what shape I like. She was near being wiled away from me in my absence through her excess of simplicity; but, to say the truth, it is better that a wife should err on that side. The cure for these faults is easy; every simple person is docile; and, if she is led out of the right way, a couple of words will instantly bring her back again. But a clever woman is quite another sort of animal. Our lot depends only on her judgment; nought can divert her from what she is set on, and our teaching in such a case is futile. Her wit avails her to ridicule our maxims, often to turn her vices into virtues, and to find means to cheat the ablest, so as to compass her own ends. We labour in vain to parry the blow; a clever woman is a devil at intrigue, and when her whim has mutely passed sentence on our honour, we must knock under. Many good fellows could tell as much. But my

blundering friend shall have no cause to laugh; he has reaped the harvest of his gossip. This is the general fault of Frenchmen. When they have a love adventure, secrecy bores them, and silly vanity has so many charms for them, that they would rather hang themselves than hold their tongues. Ah! women are an easy prey to Satan when they go and choose such addle-pates! And when . . . But here he is . . . I must dissemble, and find out how he has been mortified.

SCENE IV.

HORACE, ARNOLPHE.[26]

Hor. I am come from your house. Fate seems resolved that I shall never meet you there. But I shall go so often that some time or other . . .

Ar. Bah, for goodness sake, do not let us begin these idle compliments. Nothing vexes me like ceremony; and, if I could have my way, it should be abolished. It is a wretched custom, and most people foolishly waste two-thirds of their time on it. Let us put on our hat, without more ado. [*Puts on his hat*] Well, how about your love affair? May I know, Mr Horace, how it goes? I was diverted for a while by some business that came into my head; but since then I have been thinking of it. I admire the rapidity of your commencement, and am interested in the issue.

Hor. Indeed, since I confided in you, my love has been unfortunate.

Ar. Ay! How so?

Hor. Cruel fate has brought her governor back from the country.

Ar. What bad luck!

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[26] See Appendix, Note J.

Hor. Moreover, to my great sorrow, he has discovered what has passed in private between us.

Ar. How the deuce could he discover this affair so soon?

Hor. I do not know; but it certainly is so. I meant, at the usual hour, to pay a short visit to my young charmer, when, with altered voice and looks, her two servants barred my entrance, and somewhat rudely shut the door in my face, saying "Begone, you bring us into trouble!"

Ar. The door in your face!

Hor. In my face.

Ar. That was rather hard.

Hor. I wished to speak to them through the door; but to all I said their only answer was, "You shan't come in; master has forbidden it."

Ar. Did they not open the door then?

Hor. No. And Agnès from the window made me more certain as to her master's return, by bidding me begone in a very angry tone, and flinging a stone at me into the bargain.

Ar. What, a stone?

Hor. Not a small one either; that was how she rewarded my visit with her own hands.

Ar. The devil! These are no trifles. Your affair seems to me in a bad way.

Hor. True, I am in a quandary through this unlucky return.

Ar. Really I am sorry for you; I declare I am.

Hor. This fellow mars all.

Ar. Yes; but that is nothing. You will find a way to recover yourself.

Hor. I must try by some device to baffle the strict watch of this jealous fellow.

Ar. That will be easy: after all, the girl loves you.

Hor. Doubtless.

Ar. You will compass your end.

Hor. I hope so.

Ar. The stone has put you out, but you cannot wonder at it.

Hor. True; and I understood in a moment that my rival was there, and that he was directing all without being seen. But what surprised me, and will surprise you, is another incident I am going to tell you of; a bold stroke of this lovely girl, which one could not have expected from her simplicity. Love, it must be allowed, is an able master; he teaches us to be what we never were before; a complete change in our manners is often the work of a moment under his tuition. He breaks through the impediments in our nature, and his sudden feats have the air of miracles. In an instant he makes a miser liberal, a coward brave, a churl polite. He renders the dullest soul fit for anything, and gives wit to the most simple. Yes, this last miracle is surprising in Agnès; for, blurting out these very words: "Begone, I am resolved never to receive your visits. I know all you would say, and *there* is my answer!" —this stone, or pebble, at which you are surprised, fell at my feet, with a letter. I greatly admire this note, chiming in with the significance of her words, and the casting of the stone. Are you not surprised by such an action as this? Does not love know how to sharpen the understanding? And can it be denied that his ardent flames have marvellous effects on the heart? What say you of the trick, and of the letter? Ah, do you not admire her cunning contrivance? Is it not amusing to see what a part my jealous rival has played in all this game? Say . .

Ar. Ay, very amusing.[27]

Hor. Laugh at it, then. [*Arnolphe forces a laugh*]

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[27] See Appendix, Note K.

This fellow, garrisoned against my passion, who shuts himself up in his house, and seems provided with stones, as though I were preparing to enter by storm, who, in his ridiculous terror, encourages all his household to drive me away, is tricked before his very eyes by her whom he would keep in the utmost ignorance! For my part, I confess that, although his return throws my love affair into disorder, I think all this so exceedingly comical, that I cannot forbear laughing at it whenever it comes into my head. It seems to me that you do not laugh at it half enough.

Ar. [*With a forced laugh*] I beg pardon; I laugh at it as much as I can.

Hor. But I must shew you her letter, for friendship's sake. Her hand knew how to set down all that her heart felt; but in such touching terms, so kind, so innocently tender, so ingenuous—in a word, just as an unaffected nature confesses its first attack of love.

Ar. [*Softly*] This is the use you make of writing, you hussey. It was against my wish you ever learned it.

Hor. [Reads] "*I wish to write to you, but I am at a loss how to begin. I have some thoughts which I should like you to know; but I do not know how to tell them to you, and I mistrust my own words. As I begin to feel that I have been always kept in ignorance, I fear to say something which is not right, and to express more than I ought. In fact, I do not know what you have done to me; but I feel that I am desperately vexed at what I am made to do against you, that it will be the hardest thing in the world for me to do without you, and that I should be very glad to be with you. Perhaps it is wrong to say that, but the truth is I cannot help saying it, and I wish it could be brought about without harm. I am assured that all young men are deceivers, that they must not be listened to, and that all you told me was but to deceive me; but I assure you*

I have not yet come to believe that of you, and I am so touched by your words that I could not believe them false. Tell me frankly if they be: for, to be brief, as I am without an evil thought, you would be extremely wicked to deceive me, and I think I should die of vexation at such a thing."

Ar. [*Aside*] Ah, the cat!

Hor. What is wrong?

Ar. Wrong? Nothing! I was only coughing.

Hor. Have you ever heard a more tender expression? In spite of the cursed endeavours of unreasonable power, could you imagine a more genuine nature? Is it not beyond doubt a terrible crime villainously to mar such an admirable spirit, to try to stifle this bright soul in ignorance and stupidity? Love has begun to tear away the veil, and if, thanks to some lucky star, I can deal, as I hope, with this sheer animal, this wretch, this hang-dog, this scoundrel, this brute . . .

Ar. Good-bye.

Hor. Why are you in such a hurry?

Ar. It just occurs to me that I have a pressing engagement.

Hor. But do you not know anyone, for you live close by, who could get access to this house? I am open with you, and it is the usual thing for friends to help each other in these cases. I have no one there now except people who watch me; maid and man, as I just experienced, would not cease their rudeness and listen to me, do what I would. I had for some time in my interest an old woman of remarkable shrewdness; in fact more than human. She served me well in the beginning; but the poor woman died four days ago. Can you not devise some plan for me?

Ar. No, really. You will easily find some one without me.

Hor. Good-bye then. You see what confidence I put in you.[28]

[28] See Appendix, Note L.

SCENE V.

ARNOLPHE, *alone.*

How I am obliged to suffer before him! How hard it is to conceal my gnawing pain! What! Such ready wit in a simpleton? The traitress has pretended to be so to my face, or the devil has breathed this cunning into her heart. But now that cursed letter is the death of me. I see that the rascal has corrupted her mind, and has established himself there in my stead. This is despair and deadly anguish for me. I suffer doubly by being robbed of her heart, for love as well as honour is injured by it. It drives me mad to find my place usurped, and I am enraged to see my prudence defeated. I know that to punish her guilty passion I have only to leave her to her evil fate, and that I shall be revenged on her by herself; but it is very vexatious to lose what we love. Good Heaven! after employing so much philosophy in my choice, why am I to be so terribly bewitched by her charms? She has neither relatives, friends, nor money; she abuses my care, my kindness, my tenderness; and yet I love her to distraction, even after this base trick! Fool, have you no shame? Ah, I cannot contain myself; I am mad; I could punch my head a thousand times over. I shall go in for a little; but only to see what she looks like after so vile a deed. Oh Heaven, grant that my brow may escape dishonour; or rather, if it is decreed that I must endure it, at least grant me, under such misfortunes, that fortitude with which few are endowed.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

ARNOLPHE, *alone.*

I declare I cannot rest anywhere; my mind is troubled by a thousand cares, thinking how to contrive, both indoors and out, so as to frustrate the attempts of this coxcomb. With what assurance the traitress stood the sight of me! She is not a whit moved by all that she has done, and though she has brought me within an inch of the grave, one could swear, to look at her, that she had no hand in it. The more composed she looked when I saw her, the more I was enraged, and those ardent transports which inflamed my heart seemed to redouble my great love for her. I was provoked, angry, incensed against her, and yet I never saw her look so lovely. Her eyes never seemed to me so bright; never before did they inspire me with such vehement desires; I feel that it will be the death of me, if my evil destiny should bring upon me this disgrace. What! I have brought her up with so much tenderness and forethought; I have had her with me from her infancy; I have indulged in the fondest hopes about her; my heart trusted to her growing charms; I have fondled her as my own for thirteen years, as I imagined,—all for a young fool, with whom she is in love, to come and carry her off before my face, and that when she is already half married to me! No, by Heaven—no, by Heaven, my foolish young friend; you will be a cunning fellow to overturn my scheme, for, upon my word, all your hopes will be in vain, and you shall find no reason for laughing at me!

SCENE II.

A NOTARY, ARNOLPHE.

Not. Ah, there he is. Good-day. Here I am, ready to draw up the contract which you wish.

Ar. [*Not seeing or hearing him*] How is it to be done?

Not. It must be in the usual form.

Ar. [*Thinking himself alone*] I shall take the greatest possible care.

Not. I shall do nothing contrary to your interests.

Ar. [*Not seeing him*] I must guard against all surprise.

Not. It is enough that your affairs are placed in my hands. For fear of deception, you must not sign the contract before receiving the portion.

Ar. [*Thinking himself alone*] I fear, if I let anything get abroad, that this business will become town talk.

Not. Well, it is easy to avoid this publicity, and your contract can be drawn up privately.

Ar. [*Thinking himself alone*] But how shall I manage it with her?

Not. The jointure should be proportionate to the fortune she brings you.

Ar. [*Not seeing him*] I love her, and that love is my great difficulty.

Not. In that case the wife may have so much the more.

Ar. [*Thinking himself alone*] How can I act towards her in such a case?

Not. The regular way is that the husband that is to be settles on the wife that is to be a third of her marriage portion as a jointure; but this rule goes for nothing, and you may do a great deal more if you have a mind to it.

Ar. If . . . [*Seeing him.*]

Not. As for the *préciput*,[29] that is a question for both sides. I say the husband can settle on his wife what he thinks proper.

[29] *Préciput* is an advantage stipulated by the marriage-contract, in favour of the survivor, and which is taken from the joint fund before the property is divided.

Ar. Eh!

Not. He can benefit her, when he loves her much, and wishes to do her a favour, and that by way of jointure, or settlement as it is called, which is lost upon her death; either without reversion, going from her to her heirs, or by statute, as people have a mind, or by actual deed of gift in form, which may be made either single or mutual. Why do you shrug your shoulders? Am I talking like a fool, or do I not understand contracts? Who can teach me? No one, I imagine. Do I not know that when people are married, they have a joint right to all moveables, moneys, fixtures, and acquisitions, unless they resign it by act of renunciation? Do I not know that a third part of the portion of the wife that is to be becomes common, in order . . .

Ar. Yes, verily, you know all this; but who has said one word to you about it?

Not. You, who seem to take me for a fool, shrugging your shoulders, and making faces at me.

Ar. Hang the man and his beastly face! Good day: that's the way to get rid of you.

Not. Was I not brought here to draw up a contract?

Ar. Yes, I sent for you. But the business is put off; I shall send for you again when the time is fixed. What a devil of a fellow he is with his jabbering!

Not. [*Alone*] I think he is mad, and I believe I am right.

SCENE III.

A NOTARY, ALAIN, GEORGETTE.

Not. Did you not come to fetch me to your master?

Al. Yes.

Not. I do not know what you think; but go and tell him from me that he is a downright fool.

Geo. We will not fail.

SCENE IV.

ARNOLPHE, ALAIN, GEORGETTE.[30]

Geo. Sir . . .

Ar. Come here! You are my faithful, my good, my real friends; I have news for you.

Al. The notary . . .

Ar. Never mind; some other day for that. A foul plot is contrived against my honour. What a disgrace it would be for you, my children, if your master's honour were taken away! After that, you would not dare to be seen anywhere; for whoever saw you would point at you. So, since the affair concerns you as well as me, you must take such care that this spark may not in any way . . .

Geo. You have taught us our lesson just now.

Ar. But take care not to listen to his fine speeches.

Al. Oh, certainly . . .

Geo. We know how to deny him.

Ar. Suppose he should come now, wheedling: "Alain, my good fellow, cheer my drooping spirits by a little help!"

Al. You are a fool.

Ar. You are right! [*To Georgette*] "Georgette, my darling, you look so sweet-tempered and so kind!"

Geo. You are a lout.

Ar. You are right. [*To Alain*] "What harm do you find in an honest and perfectly virtuous scheme?"

Al. You are a rogue.

Ar. Capital! [*To Georgette*] "I shall surely die if you do not take pity on my sufferings."

Geo. You are a brazen-faced blockhead.

Ar. First-rate! [*To Alain*] "I am not one who expects something for nothing; I can remember those who serve me. Here, Alain, is a trifle in advance, to have a drink with; and, Georgette, here is wherewith to buy you a petti-

[30] See Appendix, Note M.

coat. [*Both hold out their hands and take the money*] This is only an earnest of what I intend to do for you; I ask no other favour but that you will let me see your pretty mistress."

Geo. [*Pushing him*] Try your games elsewhere.

Ar. That was good.

Al. [*Pushing him*] Get out of this.

Ar. Very good!

Geo. [*Pushing him*] Immediately!

Ar. Good! Hulloa, that is enough.

Geo. Am I not doing right?

Al. Is this how you would have us act?

Ar. Yes, capital; except for the money, which you must not take.

Geo. We did not think of that.

Al. Shall we begin again now?

Ar. No. It is enough. Go in, both of you.

Al. You need only say so.

Ar. No, I tell you; go in when I desire you. You may keep the money. Go. I shall soon be with you again; keep your eyes open, and second my efforts.

SCENE V.

ARNOLPHE, *alone.*

I will get the cobbler, who lives at the corner of the street, to be my spy, and tell me everything. I mean to keep her always indoors, watch her constantly . . . and banish in particular all sellers of ribbons, tire-women, hair-dressers, kerchief-makers, glove-sellers, dealers in left-off apparel, and all those folks who make it their business clandestinely to bring people together who are in love. In fact, I have seen the world, and understand its tricks. My spark must be very cunning, if a love-letter or message gets in here.

SCENE VI.

HORACE, ARNOLPHE.

Hor. How lucky I am to meet you here! I had a narrow escape just now, I can assure you. As I left you, I unexpectedly saw Agnès alone on her balcony, breathing the fresh air from the neighbouring trees. After giving me a sign, she contrived to come down into the garden and open the door. But we were scarcely into her room before she heard her jealous gentleman upon the stairs; and all she could do in such a case was to lock me into a large wardrobe. He entered the room at once. I did not see him, but I heard him walking up and down at a great rate, without saying a word, but sighing desperately at intervals, and occasionally thumping the table, striking a little frisky dog, and madly throwing about whatever came in his way. In his rage, he broke the very vases with which the beauty had adorned her mantel-piece; doubtless the tricks she played must have come to the ears of this cuckold in embryo. At last, having in a score of ways vented his passion on things that could not help themselves, my restless jealous gentleman left the room without saying what disturbed him, and I left my wardrobe. We would not stay longer together, for fear of my rival; it would have been too great a risk. But late to-night I am to enter her room without making a noise. I am to announce myself by three hems, and then the window is to be opened; whereby, with a ladder, and the help of Agnès, my love will try to gain me admittance. I tell you this as my only friend. Joy is increased by imparting it; and should we taste perfect bliss a hundred times over, it would not satisfy us unless it were known to some one. I believe you will sympathise in my success. Good-bye. I am going to make the needful preparations.

SCENE VII.

ARNOLPHE, *alone.*

What, will the star which is bent on driving me to despair allow me no time to breathe? Am I to see, through their mutual understanding, my watchful care and my wisdom defeated one after another? Must I, in my mature age, become the dupe of a simple girl and a scatter-brained young fellow? For twenty years, like a discreet philosopher, I have been musing on the wretched fate of married men, and have carefully informed myself of the accidents which plunge the most prudent into misfortune. Profiting in my own mind by the disgrace of others, and having a wish to marry, I sought how to secure my forehead from attack, and prevent its being matched with those of other men. For this noble end, I thought I had put in practice all that human policy could invent; but, as though it were decreed by fate that no man here below should be exempt from it, after all my experience and the knowledge I have been able to glean of such matters, after more than twenty years of meditation, so as to guide myself with all precaution, I have avoided the tracks of so many husbands to find myself after all involved in the same disgrace! Ah, cursed fate, you shall yet be a liar! I am still possessor of the loved one; if her heart be stolen by this obnoxious fop, I shall at least take care that he does not seize anything else. This night, which they have chosen for their pretty plan, shall not be spent so agreeably as they anticipate. It is some pleasure to me, amidst all this, to know that he has warned me of the snare he is laying, and that this blunderer, who would be my ruin, makes a confidant of his own rival.

SCENE VIII.

CHRYSALDE, ARNOLPH

Ch. Well, shall we take our supper before our walk?

Ar. No, I fast to-night.

Ch. Whence this fancy?

Ar. Pray excuse me; there is something that hinders me.

Ch. Is not your intended marriage to take place?

Ar. You take too much trouble about other people's affairs.

Ch. Oh ho, so snappish? What ails you? Have you encountered any little mishap in your love, my friend? By your face I could almost swear you have.

Ar. Whatever happens, I shall at least have the advantage of being unlike some folks, who meekly suffer the visits of gallants.

Ch. It is an odd thing that, with so much intelligence, you always get so frightened at these matters; that you set your whole happiness on this, and imagine no other kind of honour in the world. To be a miser, a brute, a rogue, wicked and cowardly, is nothing in your mind compared with this stain; and however a man may have lived, he is a man of honour if he is not a cuckold. After all, why do you imagine that our glory depends on such an accident, and that a virtuous mind must reproach itself for the evil which it cannot prevent? Tell me, why do you hold that a man in taking a wife deserves praise or blame for the choice he makes, and why do you form a frightful bugbear out of the offence caused by her want of fidelity? Be persuaded that a man of honour may have a less serious notion of cuckoldom; that as none is secure from strokes of chance, this accident ought to be a matter of indifference; and that all the evil, whatever the world may say, is in the mode of receiving it. To behave well under these difficulties, as in

all else, a man must shun extremes; not ape those over-simple folks who are proud of such affairs, and are ever inviting the gallants of their wives, praising them everywhere, and crying them up, displaying their sympathy with them, coming to all their entertainments and all their meetings, and making everyone wonder at their having the assurance to show their faces there. This way of acting is no doubt highly culpable; but the other extreme is no less to be condemned. If I do not approve of such as are the friends of their wives' gallants; no more do I approve of your violent men whose indiscreet resentment, full of rage and fury, draws the eyes of all the world on them by its noise, and who seem, from their outbreaks, unwilling that any one should be ignorant of what is wrong with them. There is a mean between these extremes, where a wise man stops in such a case. When we knows how to take it, there is no reason to blush for the worst a woman can do to us. In short, say what you will, cuckolding may easily be made to seem less terrible; and, as I told you before, all your dexterity lies in being able to turn the best side outwards.

Ar. After this fine harangue, all the brotherhood owes your worship thanks; any one who hears you speak will be delighted to enrol himself.

Ch. I do not say that; for that is what I have found fault with. But as fortune gives us a wife, I say that we should act as we do when we gamble with dice, when, if you do not get what you want, you must be shrewd, and good-tempered, to amend your luck by good management.[31]

[31] This is from Terence's *Adelphi*, Act iv., Scene 8, where he says: Life is like a game where dice are employed. If we do not get the chance we need, the science of the player ought to correct fate. It may perhaps not be unnecessary to hint that the whole of Chrysalde's speeches are meant ironically, and are an imitation of the ancient *fabliaux* and of Rabelais.

Ar. That is, sleep and eat well, and persuade yourself that it is all nothing.

Ch. You think to make a joke of it; but, to be candid, I know a hundred things in the world more to be dreaded, and which I should think a much greater misfortune, than the accident you are so grievously afraid of. Do you think that, in choosing between the two alternatives, I should not prefer to be what you say, rather than see myself married to one of those good créatures whose ill-humour makes a quarrel out of nothing—those dragons of virtue, those respectable she-devils, ever piquing themselves on their wise conduct, who, because they do not do us a trifling wrong, take on themselves to behave haughtily, and, because they are faithful to us, expect that we should bear everything from them? Once more, my friend, know that cuckoldom is just what we make of it, that on some accounts it is even to be desired, and that it has its pleasures like other things.

Ar. If you are of a mind to be satisfied with it, I am not disposed to try it myself; and rather than submit to such a thing . . .

Ch. Bless me! do not swear, lest you should be forsworn. If fate has willed it, your precautions are useless; and your advice will not be taken in the matter.

Ar. I!—I a cuckold!

Ch. You are in a bad way. A thousand folks are so—I mean no offence—who, for bearing, courage, fortune and family, would scorn comparison with you.

Ar. And I, on my side, will not draw comparisons with them. But, let me tell you, this pleasantry annoys me. Let us have done with it, if you please.

Ch. You are in a passion. We shall know the cause. Good-bye; but remember, whatever your honour prompts you to do in this business, to swear you will never be what we have talked of is half-way towards being it.

Ar. And I swear it again! I am going this instant to find a good remedy against such an accident.

SCENE IX.

ARNOLPHE, ALAIN, GEORGETTE.

Ar. My friends, now is the time that I beg your assistance. I am touched by your affection; but it must be well proved on this occasion; and if you serve me in this, as I am sure you will, you may count on your reward. The man you wot of (but not a word!) seeks, as I understand, to trick me this very night, and enter, by a ladder, into Agnès' room. But we three must lay a trap for him. I would have each of you take a good cudgel, and, when he shall be nearly on the top round of the ladder (for I shall open the window at the proper time), both of you shall fall on the rascal for me, so that his back may be sure to remember it, in order that he may learn never to come here again. Yet do it without naming me in any way, or making it appear that I am behind. Would you have the courage to execute my resentment?

Al. If the thrashing is all, sir, rely on us. You shall see, when I beat, if I am a slow coach.

Geo. Though my arm may not look so strong, it shall play its part in the drubbing.

Ar. Get you in, then; and, above all, mind you do not chatter. [*Alone*] This is a useful lesson for my neighbours; if all the husbands in town were to receive their wives' gallants in this fashion, the number of cuckolds would not be so great.

ACT V. SCENE I.

ARNOLPHE, ALAIN, GEORGETTE.

Ar. Wretches! what have you done by your violence?

Al. We have obeyed you, sir.

Ar. It is of no use trying to defend yourselves by such an excuse. My orders were to beat him, not to murder him. I told you to discharge your blows on his back, and not on his head.[32] Good Heavens! into what a plight my fate has now thrown me! And what course can I take, as the man is dead? Go into the house, and be sure to say nothing of the harmless order that I gave you. [*Alone*] It will be daylight presently, and I shall go and consider how to bear myself under this misfortune. Alas! what will become of me? And what will Horace's father say when he shall suddenly hear of this affair?

SCENE II.

ARNOLPHE, HORACE.

Hor. [*Aside*] I must go and make out who it is.

Ar. [*Thinking himself alone*] Could one ever have foreseen . . . [*Running against Horace*] Who is there, pray?

Hor. Is it you, Mr Arnolphe?

Ar. Yes; but who are you?

Hor. Horace. I was going to your house to beg a favour. You are out very early.

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[32] This is imitated by Otway in *The Soldier's Fortune* (Act iv., Scene the last), when Lady Dunce and Sir Jolly Jumble accuse Sir Davy Dunce of having ordered Beaugard to be killed, and Sir Davy answers: "As I hope to be saved, neighbour, I only bargained with 'em to bastinado him in a way, or so, as one Friend might do to another; but do you say that he is dead?"

Ar. [*To himself, aside*] Wonderful! Is it magic? Is it a vision?

Hor. To tell the truth, I was in a great difficulty; I thank Heaven's great goodness that at the nick of time I thus meet you. Let me tell you that everything has succeeded, much better even than I could have predicted, and by an accident which might have spoiled all. I do not know how our appointment could possibly have been suspected; but just as I was reaching the window, I unluckily saw some persons, who, unceremoniously raising their hand against me, made me miss my footing, and fall to the ground, which, at the expense of a bruise, saved me from a score of blows. These people, of whom, I fancy, my jealous rival was one, attributed my fall to their blows, and as the pain compelled me to lie for some time motionless, they honestly thought they had killed me, and were greatly alarmed. I heard all their noise in profound silence. Each, accusing the other of the violence, and complaining of their ill fortune, came softly, without a light, to feel if I were dead. You may imagine that I contrived, in the darkness of night, to assume the appearance of a real corpse. They went away in great terror; and as I was thinking how I should make my escape, the young Agnès, frightened by my pretended death, came to me in great concern. For the talking of those people had reached her ears from the very first, and, being unobserved during all this commotion, she easily escaped from the house. But finding me unhurt, she displayed a transport which it would be difficult to describe. What more need I say? The lovely girl obeyed the promptings of her affection, would not return to her room, and committed her fate to my honour. You may judge, from this instance of innocence, to what she is exposed by the mad intolerance of a fool, and what frightful risks she might have run, if I were a man to hold her less dear than I do. But too pure a passion fills my soul; I would

rather die than wrong her. I see in her charms worthy of a better fate, and nought but death shall part us. I foresee the rage my father will be in. But we must find an opportunity to appease his anger. I cannot help being transported by charms so delightful; and, in short, we must in this life be satisfied with our lot. What I wish you to do, as a confidential friend, is to let me place this beauty under your care; and that, in the interest of my love, you will conceal her in your house for at least a day or two. For, besides that I must conceal her flight from every one, to prevent any successful pursuit of her, you know that a young girl, especially such a beautiful one, would be strongly suspected in the company of a young man; and as I have trusted the whole secret of my passion to you, being assured of your prudence, so to you only, as a generous friend, can I confide this beloved treasure.

Ar. Be assured I am entirely at your service.

Hor. You will really do me so great a favour.

Ar. Very willingly, I tell you; I am delighted at the opportunity of serving you. I thank Heaven for putting it in my way; I never did anything with so much pleasure.

Hor. How much I am obliged to you for all your kindness! I feared a difficulty on your part; but you know the world, and your wisdom can excuse the ardour of youth. One of my servants is with her at the corner of this street.

Ar. But how shall we manage, for day begins to break? If I take her here, I may be seen; and if you come to my house, the servants will talk. To take a safe course you must bring her to me in a darker place. That alley of mine is convenient; I shall wait for her there.

Hor. It is quite right to use these precautions. I shall only place her in your hands, and return at once to my lodgings, without more ado.

Ar. [*Alone*] Ah, fortune! This propitious accident makes amends for all the mischief which your caprice has done me! [*He muffles himself up in his cloak.*

SCENE III.

AGNÈS, HORACE, ARNOLPHE.

Hor. [*To Agnès*] Do not be uneasy at the place I am taking you to. I conduct you to a safe abode. It would ruin all for you to lodge with me. Go in at this door, and follow where you are led. [*Arnolphe takes her hand, without being recognised by her*].

Ag. [*To Horace*] Why do you leave me?

Hor. Dear Agnès, it must be so.

Ag. Remember then, I pray you, to return soon.

Hor. My love urges me sufficiently for that.

Ag. I feel no joy but when I see you.

Hor. Away from you I also am sad.

Ag. Alas, if that were so, you would stay here.

Hor. What! Can you doubt my excessive love?

Ag. No; you do not love me as much as I love you! . . . Ah! He is pulling me too hard!

[*Arnolphe pulls her away.*]

Hor. It is because it is dangerous, dear Agnès, for us to be seen together here; this true friend, whose hand draws you away, acts with the prudent zeal that inspires him on our behalf.

Ag. But to follow a stranger . . .

Hor. Fear nothing. In such hands you cannot but be safe.

Ag. I would rather be in Horace's; and I should [*To Arnolphe, who still drags her away*] Stay a little

Hor. Farewell. The day drives me away.

Ag. When shall I see you, then?

Hor. Very soon, you may be sure.

Ag. How weary I shall be till I do!

Hor. [*Going*] Thank Heaven, my happiness is no longer in suspense; now I can sleep securely.

SCENE IV.

ARNOLPHE, AGNÈS.

Ar. [*Concealed by his cloak, and disguising his voice*] Come; it is not there you are going to lodge. I have provided a room for you elsewhere, and intend to place you where you will be safe enough. [*Discovering himself*] Do you know me?

Ag. Ah!

Ar. My face frightens you now, hussey; it is a disappointment to you to see me here. I interrupt your love and its pretty contrivances. [*Agnès looks for Horace*] Do not imagine you can call your lover to your aid with those eyes of yours; he is too far off to give you any assistance. So, so! young as you are, you can play such pranks. Your simplicity, that seemed so extraordinary, asks if infants came through the ear; yet you manage to make an assignation by night, and to slink out silently in order to follow your gallant? Gad, how coaxing your tongue was with him! You must have been at a good school. Who the deuce has taught you so much all on a sudden? You are no longer afraid, then, to meet ghosts; this gallant has given you courage in the night time. Ah, baggage, to arrive at such a pitch of deceit! To form such a plot in spite of all my kindness! Little serpent that I have warmed in my bosom, and that, as soon as it feels it is alive, tries ungratefully to injure him that cherished it?

Ag. Why do you scold me?

Ar. Of a truth, I do wrong!

Ag. I am not conscious of harm in all that I have done.

Ar. To run after a gallant is not, then, an infamous thing?

Ag. He is one who says he wishes to marry me. I followed your directions; you have taught me that we ought to marry in order to avoid sin.

Ar. Yes; but I meant to take you to wife myself; I think I gave you to understand it clearly enough.

Ag. You did. But, to be frank with you, he is more to my taste for a husband than you. With you, marriage is a trouble and a pain, and your descriptions give a terrible picture of it; but there—he makes it seem so full of joy that I long to marry.

Ar. Oh, traitress, that is because you love him!

Ag. Yes, I love him.

Ar. And you have the impudence to tell me so!

Ag. Why, if it is true, should I not say so?

Ar. Ought you to love him, minx?

Ag. Alas! can I help it? He alone is the cause of it; I was not thinking of it when it came about.

Ar. But you ought to have driven away that amorous desire.

Ag. How can we drive away what gives us pleasure?

Ar. And did you not know that it would displease me?

Ag. I? Not at all. What harm can it do you?

Ar. True. I ought to rejoice at it. You do not love me then after all?

Ag. You?

Ar. Yes.

Ag. Alack! no.

Ar. How! No?

Ag. Would you have me tell a fib?

Ar. Why not love me, Madam Impudence?

Ag. Heaven! you ought not to blame me. Why did

you not make yourself loved, as he has done? I did not prevent you, I fancy.

Ar. I tried all I could; but all my pains were to no purpose.

Ag. Of a truth then he knows more about it than you; for he had no difficulty in making himself loved.

Ar. [*Aside*] See how the jade reasons and retorts! Plague! could one of your witty ladies say more about it? Ah, I was a dolt; or else, on my honour, a fool of a girl knows more than the wisest man. [*To Agnes*] Since you are so good at reasoning, Madam Chop-logic, should I have maintained you so long for his benefit?

Ag. No. He will pay you back, even to the last farthing.[33]

Ar. [*Aside*] She hits on words that double my vexation. [*Aloud*] With all his ability, hussey, will he discharge me the obligations that you owe me?

Ag. I do not owe you so much as you may think.

Ar. Was the care of bringing you up nothing?

Ag. Verily, you have been at great pains there, and have caused me to be finely taught throughout. Do you think I flatter myself so far as not to know in my own mind that I am an ignoramus? I am ashamed of myself, and, at my age, I do not wish to pass any longer for a fool, if I can help it.

Ar. You shrink from ignorance, and would learn something of your spark, at any cost.

Ag. To be sure. It is from him I know what I do know; I fancy I owe him much more than you.

Ar. Really, what prevents me from revenging this saucy talk with a cuff? I am enraged at the sight of her provok-

[33] In the original *jusqu' au dernier double*. A *double* was a small coin, worth two *deniers*, of which twelve made one *sou*; twenty *sous* made a *livre*, and eleven *livres* a golden *louis*.

ing coldness: and to beat her would be a satisfaction to me.

Ag. Ah, you can do that if you choose.

Ar. [*Aside*] That speech and that look disarm my fury, and bring back the tenderness to my heart which effaces all her guilt. How strange it is to be in love! To think that men should be subject to such weakness for these traitresses! Every one knows their imperfection. They are extravagant and indiscreet. Their mind is wicked, and their understanding weak. There is nought weaker, more imbecile, more faithless; and, in spite of all, everything in the world is done for the sake of these bipeds. [*To Agnès*] Well, let us make peace. Listen, little wretch, I forgive all, and restore you my affection. Learn thus how much I love you; and, seeing me so good, love me in return.

Ag. With all my heart I should like to please you, if it were in my power.

Ar. Poor little darling, you can if you will. Just listen to this sigh of love. See this dying look, behold my person, and forsake this young coxcomb and the love he inspires. He must have thrown some spell over you, and you will be a hundred times happier with me. Your desire is to be finely dressed and frolicsome; then I swear you shall ever be so; I will fondle you night and day, I will hug you, kiss you, devour you; you shall do everything you have a mind to. I do not enter into particulars; and that is saying everything. [*Aside*] To what length will my passion go? [*Aloud*] In short, nothing can equal my love. What proof would you have me give you, ungrateful girl? Would you have me weep? Shall I beat myself? Shall I tear out one half of my hair? Shall I kill myself? Yes, say so if you will. I am quite ready, cruel creature, to convince you of my love.

Ag. Stay. All you say does not touch my heart. Horace could do more with a couple of words.

Ar. Ah, this is too great an insult, and provokes my anger too far. I will pursue my design, you intractable brute, and will pack you out of the town forthwith. You reject my addresses and drive me to extremities: but the innermost cell of a convent shall avenge me of all.[34]

SCENE V.

ARNOLPHE, AGNÈS, ALAIN.

Al. I do not know how it is, master, but it seems to me that Agnès and the corpse have run away together.

Ar. She is here. Go and shut her up in my room. [*Aside*] Horace will not come here to see her. Besides, it is only for half an hour. [*To Alain*] Go and get a carriage, for I mean to find her a safe dwelling. Shut yourselves safely in, and, above all, do not take your eyes off her. [*Alone*] Perhaps when her mind is buried in solitude, she will be disabused of this passion.

SCENE VI.

HORACE, ARNOLPHE.

Hor. Oh, I come here, plunged in grief. Heaven, Mr Arnolphe, has decreed my ill fortune! By a fatal stroke of extreme injustice, I am to be torn away from the beauty whom I love. My father arrived this very evening. I found him alighting close by. In a word, the reason of his coming,

[34] Molière probably puts in the mouth of Arnolphe the doubts and fears that beset himself after a few months of his marriage with Armande Béjart, who was about half his age. This comedy was written in the summer of 1662, and was performed on the 26th of December, whilst Molière was married on the 20th of February of the same year. (See Introductory Notice to this play, page 140.)

with which, as I said, I was unacquainted, is, that he has made a match for me, without a word of warning; he has arrived here to celebrate the nuptials. Feel for my anxiety, and judge if a more cruel disappointment could happen to me. That Enrique, whom I asked you about yesterday, is the source of all my trouble. He has come with my father to complete my ruin; it is for his only daughter that I am destined. I thought I should have swooned when they first spoke of it; not caring to hear more, as my father spoke of paying you a visit, I hurried here before him, my mind full of consternation. I pray you be sure not to let him know anything of my engagement, which might incense him; and try, since he has confidence in you, to dissuade him from this other match.

Ar. Ay, to be sure!

Hor. Advise him to delay; and thus, like a friend, help me in my passion.

Ar. No fear!

Hor. All my hope is in you.

Ar. It could not be better placed.

Hor. I look on you as my real father. Tell him that my age . . . Ah, I see him coming! Hear the arguments I can supply you with.

SCENE VII.

ENRIQUE, ORONTE, CHRYSALDE, HORACE, ARNOLPHE.

[*Horace and Arnolphe retire to the back of the stage, and whisper together*]

En. [*To Chrysalde.*] As soon as I saw you, before anyone could tell me, I should have known you. I recognise in your face the features of your lovely sister, whom marriage made mine in former days. Happy should I have been if cruel fate had permitted me to bring back

that faithful wife, to enjoy with me the great delight of seeing once more, after our continual misfortunes, all her former friends. But since the irresistible power of destiny has for ever deprived us of her dear presence, let us try to submit, and to be content with the only fruit of love which remains to me. It concerns you nearly; without your consent I should do wrong in wishing to dispose of this pledge. The choice of the son of Oronte is honourable in itself; but you must be pleased with this choice as well as I.

Ch. It would argue a poor opinion of my judgment to doubt my approbation of so reasonable a choice.

Ar. [*Aside to Horace*] Ay, I will serve you finely!

Hor. Beware, once more . . .

Ar. Have no uneasiness. [*Leaves Horace, and goes up to embrace Oronte.*]

Or. Ah, this is indeed a tender embrace.

Ar. How delighted I am to see you!

Or. I am come here . . .

Ar. I know what brings you, without your telling me.

Or. You have already heard?

Ar. Yes.

Or. So much the better.

Ar. Your son is opposed to this match; his heart being pre-engaged, he looks on it as a misfortune. He has even prayed me to dissuade you from it; for my part, all the advice I can give you is, to exert a father's authority, and not allow the marriage to be delayed. Young people should be managed with a high hand; we do them harm by being indulgent.

Hor. [*Aside*] Oh, the traitor!

Ch. If it is repugnant to him, I think we ought not to force him. I think my brother will be of my mind.

Ar. What? Will he let himself be ruled by his son?

Would you have a father so weak as to be unable to make his son obey him? It would be fine indeed to see him at his time of life receiving orders from one who ought to receive them from him. No, no, he is my intimate friend, and his honour is my own. His word is passed, and he must keep it. Let him now display his firmness, and control his son's affections.

Or. You speak well; in this match I will answer for my son's obedience.

Ch. [*To Arnolphe*] I am indeed surprised at the great eagerness which you shew for this marriage, and cannot guess what is your motive . . .

Ar. I know what I am about, and speak sensibly.

Or. Yes, yes, Mr Arnolphe; he is . . .

Ch. That name annoys him. He is Monsieur de la Souche, as you were told before.

Or. It makes no difference.

Hor. [*Aside*] What do I hear?

Ar. [*Turning to Horace*] Ay, that is the mystery; you can judge as to what it behoved me to do. .

Hor. [*Aside*] What a scrape . . .

SCENE VIII.

ENRIQUE, ORONTE, CHRYSALDE, HORACE, ARNOLPHE, GEORGETTE.

Geo. Sir, if you do not come, we shall scarcely be able to hold Agnès; she is trying all she can to get away; I fear she will throw herself out of the window.

Ar. Bring her to me, for I mean to take her away. [*To Horace*] Do not be disturbed. Continual good fortune makes a man proud. Every dog has his day, as the proverb says.

Hor. [*Aside*] Good Heaven, what misfortune can equal mine? Was ever a man in such a mess as this?

Ar. [*To Oronte*] Hasten the day of the ceremony. I am bent on it, and invite myself beforehand.

Or. That is just my intention.

SCENE IX.

AGNÈS, ORONTE, ENRIQUE, ARNOLPHE, HORACE, CHRYSALDE, ALAIN, GEORGETTE.

Ar. [*To Agnes*] Come hither, my beauty, whom they cannot hold, and who rebels. Here is your gallant, to whom, to make amends, you may make a sweet and humble curtesy. [*To Horace*] Farewell. The issue rather thwarts your desires; but all lovers are not fortunate.

Ag. Horace, will you let me be carried off in this manner?

Hor. I scarcely know where I am, my sorrow is so great.

Ar. Come along, chatterbox.

Ag. I shall stay here.

Or. Tell us the meaning of this mystery. We are all staring at each other without being able to understand it.

Ar. I shall inform you at a more convenient time. Till then, good-bye.

Or. Where are you going? You do not speak to us as you should.

Ar. I have advised you to complete the marriage, let Horace grumble as much as he likes.

Or. Ay; but to complete it, have you not heard—if they have told you all—that the lady concerned in this affair is in your house?—that she is the daughter of Enrique and of the lovely Angelica, who were privately married? Now, what was at the bottom of your talk just now?

Ch. I too was astonished at his proceedings.

Ar. What?

Ch. My sister had a daughter by a secret marriage, whose existence was concealed from the whole family.

Or. And in order that nothing might be discovered, she was put out to nurse in the country by her husband, under a feigned name.

Ch. At that time, fortune being against him, he was compelled to quit his native land.

Or. To encounter a thousand various dangers in far-distant countries, and beyond many seas.

Ch. Where his industry has acquired what in his own land he lost through roguery and envy.

Or. And when he returned to France, the first thing he did was to seek out her to whom he had confided the care of his daughter.

Ch. This country-woman frankly told him that she had committed her to your keeping from the age of four.

Or. And that she did it because she received money from you, and was very poor.

Ch. Oronte, transported with joy, has even brought this woman hither.

Or. In short, you shall see her here directly to clear up this mystery to every one.

Ch. [*To Arnolphe*] I can almost imagine what is the cause of your grief; but fortune is kind to you. If it seems so good to you not to be a cuckold, your only course is not to marry.

Ar. [*Going away full of rage, and unable to speak*] Ugh! ugh! ugh!

SCENE LAST.

ENRIQUE, ORONTE, CHRYSALDE, AGNÈS, HORACE.

Cr. Why does he run away without saying a word?

Hor. Ah, father, you shall know the whole of this surprising mystery. Accident has done here what your wisdom intended. I had engaged myself to this beauty in the sweet bonds of mutual love; it is she, in a word, whom you come to seek, and for whose sake I was about to grieve you by my refusal.

En. I was sure of it as soon as I saw her; my heart has yearned for her ever since. Ah, daughter, I am overcome by such tender transports!

Ch. I could be so, brother, just as well as you. But this is hardly the place for it. Let us go inside, and clear up these mysteries. Let us shew our friend some return for his great pains, and thank Heaven, which orders all for the best.

APPENDIX.

A, Page 151.

THE scene from Molière's *School for Wives* (Act i., Sc. 1) has been imitated by Murphy in *The School for Guardians* (Act i., Sc. 2), Lovibond is Chrysalde, and Oldcastle Arnolphe.

Scene—a Street.

Enter LOVIBOND *and* OLDCASTLE.

Lovibond. And but this moment returned, Mr Oldcastle?

Oldcastle. Just this moment stepped out of the machine.

Lov. Well! and now I suppose you have prudently laid aside all thoughts of matrimony.

Old. You are a comical man, brother Lovibond. I have taken my measures; to-morrow makes me a bridegroom, and my fair ward, Miss Mary Ann, a bride.

Lov. And a little time will make you——

Old. Happy; tho', by that significant look, you have your doubts.

Lov. I have, sir; I have a shrewd guess that——

Old. Then you'll be out in your guess.

Lov. I wish your horns a'nt out first.

Old. Well said, and without any apprehension for yourself. You are still determined to marry Mary Ann's sister Harriet I suppose.

Lov. That's quite another business; what I do is no rule for your actions.

Old. It is as I ever said; each man is still looking at the hump upon his neighbour's back, but never thinks of casting an eye over his own shoulder. I warrant me now you, in your grand climacteric, will tell me I am old.

Lov. Full ten years before me in the race of life. Besides, you are a superannuated batchelor, a stranger to the ways of wedlock. I am enured to the service. . . . But, lack-a-day! you begin late. Mercy on your forehead, say I, mercy on your forehead!

Old. How blind some people are when they have taken a thing in their heads!—ha! ha!

Lov. Well! well! laugh on. But you that have been for ever a censor of your neighbours, for ever fleering and jibing at the married state——

Old. And a pleasant topic it is! why, matrimony affords a little

comedy in every family one knows. Now the education I have given Mary Ann——

Lov. Is the worst in the world.

Old. The very best! I have trained her up in plain simplicity. Woman's wit teems with contrivances to disgrace her husband. Yet you would educate Harriet in this profligate town.

Lov. Ay, and I have taught her to know right from wrong.

Old. You have indulged her in every whimsy this servile town affords.

Lov. I have shewn her the world.

Old. Have you not carried her to plays?

Lov. To see folly ridiculed.

Old. To profligate comedies?

Lov. The stage is the school of virtue.

Old. The school of sin and impudence!

Lov. Where vice undergoes the lash of satire.

Old. Where vice is made alluring, provoking!

Lov. Where young ladies may learn——

Old. The use of dark-closets, back-stairs, and ladders of rope.

Lov. Where they may learn to put on the veil of modesty.

Old. To put on the breeches, and escape from their guardians.

Lov. Where they are taught to respect grey-headed authority!

Old. To make a cuckold of authority! I know the ways of 'em all! their cards, routs, operas, soho-assemblies, all contrivances to excite curiosity, kindle desire, prompt inclination, and send 'em all dancing a jig to destruction.

Lov. Common-place invective, Harriet will know how to avoid——

Old. She will know how to deceive you.

Lov. She will have too much honour.

Old. She will have too much wit. Now Mary Ann has no wild notions, and of course no dangerous curiosity.

Lov. Her curiosity is to come. She will fall a prey to the first powdered coxcomb that bows to her.

Old. Her simplicity will preserve her.

Lov. But when the serpent of this town begins to whisper in her ear——

Old. They'll have no opportunity. She is snug in a little box of a house, which I have taken in the name of Mr Biddulph. I have another in my own name, where I transact my affairs. Nobody will see her; and when the nine days' wonder is over, I shall pack her off to the country, and so escape from impertinence.

Lov. Well! well! I can't but laugh at your system of education! Ha! ha! marry her if you will; and then, on account of your age and infirmities, you may do the business of your office by deputy. Ha! ha! a plan of simplicity. [*Exit.*

Old. Brother Lovibond, a good day to you——I wish you success—— Ha! ha! a town education for a young girl!

B, Page 157.

This scene of *The School for Wives* (Act i., Sc. 2) is given as follows in Caryl's *Sir Salomon* (Act ii., Sc. 1). Alain is called Ralph, and Georgette Alice; Sir Salomon is only known to them as Mr Evans.

SIR SALOMON *knocks at* MRS BETTY'S *lodging.*

Alice. [*From within*] Who's at dore there?

Ralph. [*Looking out from the balcony*] . . . 'tis master.

Al. What? our new master, that gave us mony?

Ral. No, no, our old Master Evans, that never gave us a farthing. Why don't you open the door?

Al. An't be he. E'en open it your self: I am busie.

Ral. Are you so? Why then so am I too.

Sir S. Sure they must needs hear me knock, for I can hear them gabbel. Ho; who's within there?

Ral. [*Speaks at the balcony*] Sir, this slut Alice won't open the dore.

Al. Sir, this lazy rogue Ralph won't let you in.

Sir S. Pretious coxcombes; Open the door quickly, or I'le make you both fast this se'night from beef and pudding. [*They both tumble down the stairs to the door.*]

Al. Stand off; I'le open it.

Ral. You open it? You shall be hang'd first. [*They break out at the door together.*]

Al. 'Tis I, sir, that let you in. [*Ralph lifts up his hand to strike Alice, and in so doing hits off his master's hat.*]

Ral. You lie; were it not in respects to Master Evan's worship——

Sir S. Unmannerly Whelp!

Ral. Cry you mercy, sir, 'twas she was the cause on't.

Al. Was it so? because I open'd the door first.

Sir S. Peace, both of you. Will you never arrive to Common sence? Let nobody speak till I bid them——Ralph, come hither. What has your Mistriss done since I saw her last? [*Ralph claps on his Hat three times, and his Master pulls it off as often.*]

Ral. Why, sir, my Mistriss——my Mistriss——God be thanked——

Sir S. Rude Raskal! Who taught you to speak to me with your Hat on?

Ral. Indeed your Worship has Reason; I had forgot myself.

Sir S. Go, call her down presently. [*Exit Ralph.*] Well, Alice, and was my Betty much troubled for my absence?

Al. Troubled? No.

Sir S. No!

Al. O, yes, sir. Now I think on't, she was troubled.

C, Page 159.

The quarrel about the opening of the door between Alain and Georgette in *The School for Wives* (Act i., Scene 2), is thus rendered by Murphy in *The School for Guardians* (Act i., Scene 4), as a dispute between Peter and Bridget:

Scene—Oldcastle's House.

Bridget. These London ways are comical, that's for sure. [*A rap at the door.*] More grise to the mill. Go and open the door, Peter.

Peter. Go yourself, an you go to that.

Bri. I shall budge none, not I.

Pet. Nor I, faith and troth! [*Another rap.*]

Bri. Law, how can you be so cross?

Pet. You put all upon me, that's your way. Who's at the door?

Oldcastle. [*Within*] Open the door, you varlets, open the door.

Bri. Oh! it's master. I'll go.

Pet. Master!——then I'll go.

Bri. Stand out of the way, can't you?

Pet. Stand away yourself: I be ready, ben't I?

Bri. Farther a field, will you?

Old. [*Rapping*] Within there, open the door, I say.

Pet. Nobody shall but I. [*Opens the door*] Sarvant, master.

Enter OLDCASTLE.

Bri. Welcome home, master.

Old. Why am I to wait thus?

Pet. It was all her doings.

Bri. It was all his doings as well as I.

Old. Peace, numskulls! how is everybody at home?

Pet. Charmingly well.

Bri. All in pure health, praise for every thing; and Miss Mary Ann sings about the house like a little bird in a cage.

Old. Has not she been melancholy since I went into the country?

Bri. No, Lord love her, not she.

Old. No! [*In a passion.*]

Bri. Yes!—how terrible he looks!

Old. Did not she long for my return?

Pet. Hugeously! so we did all.

Old. Vixen! jade! villain! rascal!

Pet. I'm down o' my knees——

Bri. So be I——merciful father, how——

Old. You have obeyed my orders, have you?

Pet. He'll murder us both, as sure as a gun.

Old. What, you are sneaking away, are you? Oh! it's all too true. Come back, or ——

Bri. Yes, sir.

Pet. No, sir.

Old. Oh! Mary Ann! Mary Ann!——I could never have imagined . . . Call Mary Ann hither——

Both. Yes, sir. [*They run out.*]

Old. Now will they plot, and put their heads together. Mary Ann! ——Mary Ann!——Oh! here she comes.

D, Page 159.

This scene from Molière, *School for Husbands* (Act i., Scene 4), is imitated by Murphy in *The School for Guardians* (Act i., end), as follows. Agnès is called Mary Ann.

Enter MARY ANN, *playing with a cup and ball, singing.*

Mary Ann. So, you be come, I see.

Oldcastle. Yes, I am come home.

Mary A. Better late than never. I began to think as how you had forgot poor I. I expected you all the live-long day, so I did; and there did not go by a coach or a cart, or a horse or an ass, but I thought it was you. Ah! I am glad you're come. What's the matter? Ben't you well?

Old. You have been very well, I hope, since I left you.

Mary A. Oh! yes, purely. Neither sick nor sorry, not I. By goles, that is not true neither, for last night——

Old. Last night!——what of last night?

Mary A. Little Pompey barked so all night long, I could not sleep a wink.

Old. Is that all? You have not been out anywhere, have you?

Mary A. Out!——law, where should I go? I don't like going out in this strange outlandish place. I like the country better by half.

Old. Well! well! you shall go back soon.

Mary A. But then mayn't I go and see sister Harriet first? an ill natured thing that's what she is: she has not been to see poor I, ever since I came to the great town.

Old. You shall see her. So you passed your time very merrily.

Mary A. Never better in all my days. But you don't seem glad to see a body.

Old. Yes, yes, I am glad to see you. The little Jezabel won't tell me a word. [*Aside*]——shall I tax her with it directly, or wait a little longer to see her cunning?——Let you and I go and chat a little together above stairs.

Mary A. Ah! you look cross. With all heart, I'll go—one, two, three and away. [*Exit.*

Old. The little frippery, how she carries it off!——I burn, I'm in a fever: I have had the grass cut under my feet. Oh! The young Magdalen! The sly iniquity! Mary Ann, come back I say.

E, Page 160.

Murphy in *The School for Guardians* (Act i. Scene 2), imitates this scene from *The School for Wives* (Act i. Scene 6). Horace is called in the English play Brumpton, and Arnolphe Oldcastle.

BRUMPTON, OLDCASTLE.

Brumpton. Hey! is not that Mr Oldcastle?

Oldcastle. Mr Brumpton!——I rejoice to see you.

Bru. My dear friend, you are come in the very crisis of my fate.

Old. Recover your senses a little, and tell me at your leisure what is this mighty business.

Bru. Oh! business of such nature!

Old. You are in request among the ladies, no doubt —— Now will he lie like an attorney's clerk. [*Aside*] You are going to help some worthy gentleman to an heir to his estate, I warrant me.

Bru. I am going to help my father to a grandson.

Old. Going to be married!

Bru. This day may perhaps crown my joys. Some certain fumblers at this end of the town, who were a little alarmed at the proportions of this leg, intend to light their windows upon it; the Court of Aldermen is preparing all demonstrations of joy; and their unhappy wives are going into deep mourning upon the occasion!

Old. The same confident fop he ever was! Well! and my friend Sir Theodore, what says he to all this?

Bru. You know his way; the same old crabbed humour. He has made a match for me elsewhere with one that——I would not deny the lady her merit——she preserves and pickles well, and is a very notable keeper of accounts.

Old. She has a fortune, I presume.

Bru. Does not want acres.

Old. And you prefer one without any.

Bru. You mistake me! she's an heiress; it is not clear that she is of age, but as soon as she come to years of discretion ——

Old. Then she may play the fool as fast as she will. But how did you bring this about, pray?

Bru. An old way that I have: I came, saw, and conquered. I saw her at her window. ——Such blooming sweetness! Her eyes were through my heart at once: love inspired me with due courage.

Old. That was right: a bold stroke for a wife.

Bru. I drank tea with her the very next evening. I must indeed admit, that her understanding is the most accomplished.

Old. So best: never marry a wit.

Bru. She is at present rather in a state of ignorance: but from those blue eyes she occasionally darts such glances, as bespeak a mind susceptible of the highest refinement.

Old. Where does she live?

Bru. In the very next street.

Old. What, that street there?

Bru. Yes, that: under the care of the veriest muck-worm!

Old. He means me, I fear. [*Aside*] And her name, pray?

Bru. Miss Mary Ann Richley.

Old. Wounds! what a discovery here is! [*Aside*

Bru. Her guardian's name is Biddulph. Perhaps you may know him.

Old. No, not I. The young rake-hell. [*Aside.*

Bru. He means to abuse his trust, and confine youth and beauty within the arms of age and ugliness. There's an old rogue for you! Does not he deserve to be hanged?

Old. What a young villain! [*Aside.*

Bru. I beg your pardon: I did not hear.

Old. I am seized with an ugly fit of coughing—[*Coughs*] But you should consider; the marriage act is very strict, and requires the consent of prudent people.

Bru. Po! that's nothing. Abuse Scotland as they will, it enables us to evade the laws of England. Well now, adieu!—Oh! I forgot to tell you. She'll be mine this very day. Brisk, my fellow, who is a footman of talents, is to go to her as a tenant from the country, come to town with old Biddulph's commands to carry her down with him in the fly. She is so simple she will believe it; and the oafs about her will bite like gudgeons; and so—ha! ha!—I kindle into rapture. I must fly to know the happy tidings. Did you ever know so happy an adventure? [*Exit*

F, Page 164.

This scene from *The School for Wives* (Act i. Scene 6), is pretty closely imitated in Caryl's *Sir Salomon* (Act ii. Scene 5). Horace is called Peregreen.

Sir Salomon. Well, and How long have you been in England?

Pereg. Some ten dayes; in all which time I could not, till yesterday, find out your Habitation.

Sir S. And how does your own Country relish with you, since your experience of Foreign Parts?

Per. Better, then before.

Sir S. I rejoyce to see you make such good use of your Travels; For, the best thing which a man can bring from abroad, is the love of home. And, How have you spent your time, since your coming over? methinks a young man of your Complexion should be engaged, ere this, in some Love-adventure: What? Are the Ladies Kind to you?

Per. Considering the shortness of the time, I have no reason to Complain.

Sir S. Pray, make me your Confident; I am Secret, and true to Love. What Exploit? What Success have you had? . . .

Per. I confess, here is a young Beauty here in Town, which has already gain'd very much upon my heart: She is one, who has received no improvement from Education; Nor does she want it; For, Nature has left her so well finished, that Art has little to do. Perhaps her Ignorance is greater then ordinary; but that's abundantly recompenc'd by her Innocence: An Aire so taking, so free, so modest, I never yet beheld in any Face . . .

Sir S. Pray, what is her name? and Where does she lodge?

Per. By those about her she's called Mrs Betty; and I enquired no farther of her name; she's lodged in a House on the back-side of Holborn, towards the Fields.

Sir S. Hell, and Devils, what is 't I hear? [*Apart.*

Per. But, the pleasant part of this Story is, that all this while she is maintained, and educated in a private cunning way by an old Gentleman they call Mr Evans.

Sir S. I have trod upon a Snake, which stings me to death. [*Apart.*

Per. Sure, he's a person so very remarkable in his Kind, that you must needs know him; Has he not the reputation of a Formal Coxcomb?

Sir S. I have heard of the name——I burst—I die. [*Apart.*

Per. 'Tis much, you should not know him: Though I never saw the Man, yet the extravagant economy of his Family, and his exottick way of training up this Lovely Creature sufficiently discovers to me the politick worme in his Pate——But, to my thinking, Sir, you don't rellish this Narrative, as I expected.

Sir S. O! yes, Sir.

Per. I am afraid, you are of too scrupulous a Conscience for such Relations.

Sir S. Not at all, Sir.

Per. For my own part, I must acknowledge, that I never embarked in a Love-Adventure more to my satisfaction in my life: For, though my Passion for her be very great, yet the pleasure of disappointing the ridiculous Policy of this old jealous Guardian is very near as great as that which I receive in the enjoyment of her affection——But, Sir, I perceive my story growes tedious to you; Nor can I blame your want of Patience, having Love-Concernes of your own, more pressing and urgent; I shall therefore only Conjure you to be a faithful preserver of my secret; since the rendring of it publick, would ruine my happiness so well begun: Especially should it come to the Politick Ears of that Mr Evans. Farewell. [*Exit Peregreen.*

Sir S. Is there a Torment?——

Per. [*Enters again*] As you are my Friend, and a Person of Honour, let nothing of this be discovered to my Father, when he comes to Town; For I know not, how far such a business, as this, may work upon him to my prejudice. [*Exit Peregreen.*

G, Page 168.

This scene of Molière's *School for Wives* (Act ii. Scene 6), is rendered as follows by Murphy in his *School for Guardians* (Act i. end). Agnès is called Mary Ann.

Mary Ann. Ah, I see you don't love me——.

Oldcastle. You are much mistaken, draw a chair . . . Sit down . . . Well! and how have you passed your time in my absence?

Mary A. As well as any thing.

Old. Have you any news?

Mary A. News! . . . law, not I . . . fikins, I fib tho'. I have news to tell you.

Old. Have you? Well!

Mary A. Little kitten's dead.

Old. Indeed!

Mary A. Ah! if you had seen all its pretty little tricks, and how it played about. It grieved me to lose she. But squirrel's well.

Old. Is he?

Mary A. Yes, and so is mackaw.

Old. Ay! that's good news.

Mary A. Yes, and I have marked three shirts, and hemmed five handkerchiefs.

Old. Mighty well! [*pauses and looks at her earnestly*] Mary Ann, this is a wide and dangerous world we live in: scandal, malice, and detraction are ever flying about, constantly on the wing, and spreading pernicious tales to the ruin of every character.

Mary A. You frighten a body, you talk so.

Old. Draw near, sweet, draw near. Some impertinent neighbours have whispered . . . but I did not believe 'em—they have said, that while I was in the country, a young gentleman frequented here, and was well received, Mary Ann. But I have laid a wager there was no foundation for any such idle givings out.

Mary A. How much have you laid?

Old. Five pounds to four.

Mary A. All that! make a hedge of it, as you did at the horse-race.

Old. Why so?

Mary A. Cause, you'll lose.

Old. Then there was a young gentleman here.

Mary A. As sure as a gun. He was here for ever and for ever, morning, noon, and night.

Old. But, my little lambkin, did not I forbid any visits? I won't be certain, but if my memory does not fail me——

Mary A. Oh! for a matter o' that, you may be certain: you did forbid it, sure enough.

Old. And why was I disobeyed, my dear?

Mary A. It's the surprisingest thing in the world: I'll tell you all about it.

Old. That's right; let us hear.

Mary A. I was sitting in the balcony, thinking of no earthly thing, and he passed by on the other side of the way——Ah! he looked as handsome as an angel, and so he made me a low bow: I blushed up to my very ears, and so I got up, and made a low curtsey; and so he kissed his hand, and I could not help smiling at that, and so he bowed again and again, and I curtseyed again and again, and then he walked up the street, and down the street, and to and fro, and backwards and forwards; and would you believe it? He did not miss a time making me a bow with all the good nature in the world, and so I was as good natured as he, and if he had staid all night long, I should have staid too, for I thought it would not be right to be outdone in civility.

Old. Oh! those damned balconies, I always hated them. Well! well! go on, Mary Ann.

Mary A. Well, and so the next day a large comely fat gentlewoman came to me, and she had three or four band-boxes full of fine things, and she said she had orders to give me my choice of charming lace, and charming ribbons——

Old. Oh! the execrable procuress! [*Aside.*

Mary A. You are very pretty, my dear, says she, but it's a pity you should be mewed up here. And then she offered me to take me home to her own house, and said she would dizen me out with diamonds, and then a lord would fall in love with me.

Old. The infernal sorceress! [*Aside.*

Mary A. And then could you think of her goodness? Indeed I can't help loving her for it. She offered me to go and meet the young gentleman at her house. I thanked her, and took it very kind, but I did not care to go to strange places, and so I said the gentleman might come here if he would.

Old. Oh! the travelling milliner! [*Aside*] Well, and did he come?

Mary A. That he did sure enough. And he said the very sight of me cured him of his wounds. Ah! I am sure you can't blame me, for I could not let him die, so I could not. I almost cried my eyes out when little kitten died.

Old. Brother Lovibond is right. Oh! I dread the rest. [*Aside.*

Mary A. Ah!——but you are angry now——

Old. No, not angry. Well! how did he behave?

Mary A. Ah! he had such a pretty smile, and he gave me this twee: and he gave Bridget and Peter whole handfuls of money.

Old. What did he say?

Mary A. Oh! the prettiest words in the world.

Old. But he did not touch you?

Mary A. By goles, I beg your pardon for that, but he did though.

Old. I guessed so. [*Aside*]—Go on.

Mary A. He kissed me a thousand and a thousand times.

Old. Daggers! daggers! daggers! [*Aside.*

Mary A. And squeezed my hand so tenderly.

Old. Poison! wormwood! wormwood!

Mary A. He took me round the neck.

Old. I thought as much. [*Aside*]——proceed.

Mary A. And round the waist, and he——

Old. Now, now; now for the worst.——How I tremble!

Mary A. What's the matter with you?

Old. Nothing——we shall have some rain——my corn shoots; that's all. Did you do nothing more to cure his wounds?

Mary A. Look you there now! you are angry: ought I to have done more?

Old. No; enough of all conscience; but, are you sure this was all?

Mary A. He gave me this fan, and a pair of earrings; and I am sure it was very civil of him to show so much good nature to a stranger.

Old. Mary Ann, Mary Ann, all his smooth words, all his tenderness, all his smiles, were baits to entrap you, to ensnare you to your ruin.

Mary A. Ah! but he told me to the contrary, over and over, and over again.

Old. I know the world: it was all for your destruction. Go up to your room: all this shall be explained to you.

Mary A. Ah! but you are out of humour with a body.

Old. Do as I bid you.

Mary A. Yes, that's what I will. By goles, he's a sweet gentleman, for all you, that's what he is. [*Aside.*] [*Exit.*

Old. [*Alone*] What an escape have I had! and yet her ingenuous manner of confessing all, gives me some hopes. I'll read her a lecture, and then I'll go and let Sir Theodore Brumpton know what a villain his son is. Oh! Mary Ann, Mary Ann!

H, Page 174.

Bickerstaffe, in his *Love in the City* (Act iii. Scene 2) has partly imitated the sixth scene of the second act from Molière's play. Agnès is called Priscilla, and Arnolphe is represented by either Wagg or Barnacle.

Barnacle. Oh! Madam run—away——

Priscilla. Don't be angry, pray don't, and I'll tell you——

Wagg. No, Sir, pray don't be in a passion with Miss, and she will confess everything; for as I told you, my dear, this gentleman should be with regard to you, what a bridle is to a horse, a rudder to a ship, a dog to a blind man. You are the horse, he is the bridle; you are the

ship, he is the rudder; you are the blind man, he is the dog: and I cannot help thinking Mr Barnacle, he was a wise fellow who said, brisk girls are like champaign, which will fly if it be not well cork'd up. Now, Sir, by the words cork'd up is meant——

Barn. Hussy, what made you out last night?

Pris. Why, it was master Watty made me, we were going to Edinburgh! to be married.

Barn. To Edinburgh! oh the dog—Walter!

Wagg. Master Watty?

Barn. What Sirrah, you took this girl out with you last night, in order to go to Edinburgh to be married.

Y. Cockney. Well, it was she herself proposed it.

Pris. Suppose I did, you know when I was in the house I could never be at rest for you; whenever we were alone together you were always talking bad to me.

Wagg. Oh! you young rake.

Y. Co. Talking bad to her; if ever I used an undessent expression—

Barn. Sirrah, I don't doubt it, hold your tongue; but I say, where have you been all night, let me hear that?

Pris. You 'll be angry.

Barn. Tell me the truth.

Pris. Why the gentleman that loves me, the officer that was here yesterday, met master Watty and me in the street, and took me away from him—And—but why did he take me out?

Barn. Ay, it 's very true, it 's all your fault, sirrah.

Wagg. Well, but stay darling, don't cry—Lord help it, how it's little breast pants and heaves; you say this officer took you away; where did he take you, chicken?

Pris. To his lodging, for he said he loved me so, he could not live without me, and if I did not comply with his desires, he said, he would kill himself on the spot.

Barn. Comply with his desires!

Pris. I knew now he would be in a passion.

Wagg. Contain yourself, worthy Sir; you hear this young fellow loved her; alas! Mr Barnacle, what is man? Man in this world, Sir, may be compared to a hackney-coach upon a stand; continually subject to be drawn by his unruly appetites, on one foolish jaunt or another; but you will say, if his appetites are horses, which as it were drag him along, reason is the coachman to rule those horses—But, Sir, when the coachman, reason, is drunk with passion——

Barn. Hark you, hussy, I have but one question more to ask you, are you ruin'd or not?

Pris. Oh ho—he, he, he.

Barn. You impudent.

Pris. Why, the gentleman makes me laugh.

Wagg. I fancy, Mr Barnacle, pretty Miss does not clearly understand

the purport of your question—my dear, your guardian would know—Let me see—he would know, whether you and the gentleman pass'd the night in the same chamber!

Pris. Why, I'll assure you at first I was against it, for I said I did not think it was becoming; and he said he would rather lye in the street than incommode me.

Wagg. Poor young fellow, there was good nature.

Pris. Yes, he said so, indeed; so seeing him so polite, I said he should not run the risk of catching cold for the love of me, and that I would rather put myself to any inconvenience whatever.

Wagg. Well, one good turn deserves another, that was pretty of you again.

Barn. And so you——

Pris. Why he said he 'd be civil to me.

Wagg. Mr Barnacle, I see this affair disconcerts you, but things are not so bad as to be past mending. I dare swear, this young fellow will be glad to marry her, and in spite of what some people may affect to think, I maintain a patch is better than a hole at any time——

Pris. Oh! yes, I'm sure he 'll marry me, for he gave me his promise two or three times.

Barn. Get you gone, hussy!

Pris. I knew now, this would be the way.

I, Page 175.

The following scene from Caryl's *Sir Salomon* (Act ii., Scene 2) is an imitation of the fourth scene of the first Act, and of the second scene of the third Act of Molière's *The School for Wives*. Agnès' name in English is Mrs Betty:

Enter Mrs Betty *with her work in her hand, and* Ralph.

Sir Salomon. Why, this is now, as it should be; with thy work in thy hand: Pretty Rogue; What art thou making there?

Mrs Betty. A Coefe, and a Pinner, Sir. I have made an end of your Shirts, and your Night-caps.

Sir S. That's very well: For Idleness, Betty, is the Mother of all Evil; Come, give thy work to Alice; for thou and I must talke together. Ralph, fetch me out a Chair. And, Art thou grown perfect in thy Catechisme?

Mrs B. Yes, Sir, I can say it all without Book. [*Ralph brings in a Chair, and he and Alice go forth.*]

Sir S. You two go in, and leave us alone.——But, Betty, 'tis not enough to say it by Rote; you must print it in your heart; and make it your daily study and exercise; thereby to govern all the actions of your Life. [*Sir Salomon sits down in the Chair.*] Betty, come nearer

me——hold up thy head a little more——So——Turn your Body a little this way——That's well: And whil'st I talke to thee, look up in my face——That's very well: Now, Betty, I must examine you a little, to see how you have profited in your Catechisme; First tell me, What you were made for?

Mrs B. To be your Wife, forsooth.

Sir S. And what's the Duty of a Wife?

Mrs B. To honour, and obey her Husband; and love no man but him.

Sir S. Now, What are the particular duties; which I expect from her who is to be my Wife?

Mrs B. First, to watch and observe all the motions of your Eyes, and Countenance, and accordingly to stand, go, run, sit still, speak, or be silent: Secondly, to detest and abhor going to Court, Hide-Park, Mulberry-Garden, or the Play-Houses. Thirdly, To Visit, and be visited by none of a remoter degree, than an Uncle, or an Aunt; Fourthly, to write and receive no Letters, to accept and give no Presents, but such as you see and allow of: Lastly, To warm Napkins, make Cawdles, dress Issues, give Glisters, and the like; still remembering, that the office of a Nurse inseparably belongs to the duty of your Wife.

Sir S. Incomparable Girle! Thou hast answered to admiration in all things concerning the vertues of a Wife; Now tell me, What, and how many are the deadly sins, which she ought carefully to avoid?

Mrs B. They are seven.

Sir S. Which is the First?

Mrs B. Pride: For a woman that thinks too well of herself, is apt to think better of another man, then she does of her Husband.

Sir S. Very well. What's the Second?

Mrs B. Covetousness: For she that Loves Mony overmuch, will first pick her Husband's pockets, and at last be bought and sold herself.

Sir S. That's right: Now the Third.

Mrs B. Letchery,——Pray, Sir, What's that? For you have no Annotations upon it in all your Catechisme.

Sir S. Pretty Simplicity! O Betty, That's a very Paw-thing, and must not so much as be thought on, proceed to the Fourth.

Mrs B. Anger: For Anger breeds Revenge; and a Wife's Revenge commonly lights upon the Husband's Head, and leaves dreadfully markes behind.

Sir S. The Fifth?

Mrs B. Gluttony: For the Woman, that feeds high, requires more exercise, then is to be had within doors: And modest Wives should seldome rainge abroad.

Sir S. Admirable well: I see, thou art so perfect in thy Lesson, that I may spare my self, and thee the Labour of a farther examination. Well, Betty, thou art my Master-piece; And shortly I intend to set thee forth as an Exact Modell, and Pattern to the World (which too

much needs it) of a perfect, obedient Wife; In the mean time we must repair to our several taskes, and prepare our selves, thou to be happy, I to make thee so. [*Exeunt severally.*

J, Page 180.

In Murphy's *School for Guardians* (Act ii. Scene 5), as well as in Molière's *School for Wives* (Act iii. Scene 4), the lover Brumpton (Horace) makes a confidant of the very man, Oldcastle (Arnolphe), who keeps ward over the object of his passion, but whom he only knows under a feigned name. The scene is as follows:

OLDCASTLE, BRUMPTON.

Brumpton. Oh!—I longed to see you. The old curmudgeon is returned from the country.

Oldcastle. Ay! let us hear.

Bru. The servants have changed their tone, and the door is shut in my face.

Old. I can't help laughing, Ha! Ha! this Mr Biddulph knows what he is about, I fancy.

Bru. Po! the fellow is fitter to have the funeral service read over him than the marriage ceremony. He made her come to the balcony, . . .

Old. Well! how was that?

Bru. He muffled himself up behind the curtain: She threw me out some trinkets, I had given her. But, my dear friend, she flung a letter with 'em.

Old. I long to hear about that.

Bru. The contents of it amazed me.

Old. I dare say: she told you her mind, I reckon.

Bru. Most freely, most openly. Old Nostrodamus is outwitted. For, look you here, here in her own fair hand—ten thousand blessings on her. [*Kisses the letter.*] Here, sir, the genuine dictates of her heart.

Old. He is mad, sure let me hear it.

Bru. [Reads] "*Dear Mr Brumpton, you are a charming man, and your civilities, I am sure, spring from an honest design, for my future happiness.*"

Old. In the name of wonder, what is all this. [*Aside.*]

Bru. [Reads] "*Your intentions are generous, and worthy of a gentleman.*"

Old. The little sorceress.

Bru. [Reads] "*You are handsome in your person, and your manners also, and the admiration of all our sex.*"

Old. Oh! the Jezebel. [*Aside.*

Bru. [Reads] "*I hate Mr Biddulph, an odious old wretch: and* ——"

Old. The vile harlotry! [*Aside.*

Bru. [Reads] "*And out of my guardian's hands it is in your power to relieve me. Yours indeed, and indeed, untill death us do part.—Mary Ann Richley.*"

Old. She has reversed every word of it!

Bru. There's an adventure! ha! ha! ha!——Is not she a charming girl? You don't partake of my joy.

Old. Partake of your joy—I—I—I—yes. [*Looking uneasy.*

Bru. What a way old Biddulph will be in.

Old. Why, I must say I feel for him.

Bru. Feel for him, a base betrayer of his trust! who could offer his withered superannuated love to the sweetest girl, and with the winter of old age nip so much beauty in its bud! January and May joined together! does not that make you laugh?

Old. I am afraid of laughing, tho' I love it of all things. It sets me coughing. Well! but trouble may come of all this.

Bru. Never be uneasy! An't you amazed at my success?

Old. I am indeed. I never was so confounded in all my days. [*Aside*] I wish as heartily as a minister of state that there was not such a thing as pen, ink, and paper in the kingdom. [*Aside.*

Bru. What's the matter with you?

Old. A megrim has suddenly taken me. Take care what you do. I thought you were going into the country. I have let your man Brisk have two hundred for your use.

Bru. Have you? Nobly done! that will help me to carry her off. You have furnished me with the sinews of war.

Old. Oh! the vile baggage! I am undone; I am ruined. I must run home directly. [*Exit.*

Bru. What's the matter with the old curmudgeon?

K, Page 182.

The quarrel between Arnolphe (Sir Salomon) and the two servants, and the explanation between the first and Agnès (Mrs Betty), which occupies the whole of the second act of *The School for Wives*, and nearly the whole of the third act of Caryl's *Sir Salomon*, are almost identical in both plays. This is the opening of the fourth act of *Sir Salomon*, taken from the fourth scene of the third act of *The School for Wives.*

Peregreen. Sir Salomon; I have been to waite on you at your Lodging; and have sought you farr and neer.

Sir Salomon. Good Mr Peregreen, y'are heartily wellcome. Well; and how thrives Love? I suppose by this y'are in a fair possibility of enjoyment.

Per. I have had some Traverses in my affairs since I last imparted them to you.

Sir S. I protest, I'm extreamly sorry for it. Why, What's the matter?

Per. Without dispute, that watchfull dragon, old Evans, smells the powder, and stands upon his Guard to countermine all my Designs.

Sir S. What reason have you to think so?

Per. I know it must so; For, I had absolutely gain'd those two Animals, the Man and Maid of the Family; and made them as tame and obedient to all my purposes, as watch 't-Hawkes; And now (all on the sudden) they are turn'd Haggard again, know me not, and repulse me with such rudeness, as if they had never seen my face, nor taken my Mony. . . . For (not many houres since) going to visit my Betty, as I use to do, when I came to the House, and had one foot in, they shut the Door with violence upon me; and both Man and Maid cry'd out, What make you here? here's nothing for you—— . . . However, I venter'd to knock once more; and presently Betty herself came to the belcony, and threw a huge Brick-bat at me, telling me, That was her Answer to all I had to say.

Sir S. A Brick-bat, say you? That was an odd Favour for a Mistress to bestow on her Gallant; But, Did it hit you?

Per. No; I had the good fortune to avoid the blow. . . . She, being constrain'd by her Tyrant to give me this unwilling Repulse, at the same time under the shelter of that Brick-bat dropt a Letter at my Feet so full of sweetness, and unsophisticated love, exprest with so much Innocence and Modesty, that now I'm no less charm'd with the beauty of her Mind then with the Loveliness of her Person.

Sir S. I am relaps'd into Torment. [*Apart.*]

Per. As you are my Friend, I must needs shew you her Letter; For, I believe, you never saw a more admirable piece in the kind.

He then shows the letter, which is a literal translation from the French, and Sir Salomon behaves in the same manner as Arnolphe; even the fourth scene of the fifth act of *The School for Wives* is very closely imitated. Peregreen, however, asks Sir Salomon to deliver a letter to Mrs Betty, which incident is not in the French play, but Horace and Peregreen both trust the object of their affections into the hands of the very dotard whose love she wishes to avoid.

L, Page 184.

Wycherley, in his *Country Wife* (Act iv., Sc. 2) has also partly imitated that scene of Molière's *School for Husbands*, wherein Agnès (Mrs Pinchwife) is questioned by Arnolphe (Pinchwife) about the letter which she has written to her lover, Horace, but it is needless to say the English dramatist sketches it with far greater coarseness than in the original. The idea of the husband dictating the letter and the wife altering his words, is Wycherley's.

Pinchwife. Come, minx, sit down and write.

Mrs Pinchwife. Ay, dear bud, but I can't do't very well.

Pinch. I wish you could not at all.

Mrs P. But what should I write for?

Pinch. I'll have you write a letter to your lover.

Mrs P. O Lord, to the fine gentleman a letter!

Pinch. Yes, to the fine gentleman.

Mrs P. Lord, you do but jeer; sure you jest.

Pinch. I am not so merry: come write as I bid you.

Mrs P. What, do you think I am a fool?

Pinch. [*Aside*] She's afraid I would not dictate any love to him therefore she's unwilling——[*Aloud*] But you had best begin.

Mrs P. Indeed, and indeed, but I won't, so I won't.

Pinch. Why?

Mrs P. Because he's in town. You may send for him if you will.

Pinch. Very well; you would have him brought to you; is it come to this? I say, take the pen and write, or you 'll provoke me.

Mrs P. Lord, what d' ye make a fool of me for? Don't I know that letters are never writ but from the country to London and from London to the country? Now he 's in town and I 'm in town too; therefore I can't write to him, you know.

Pinch. [*Aside*] So, I am glad it is no worse; she is innocent enough yet.—[*Aloud*] Yes, you may, when your husband bids you, write letters to people that are in town.

Mrs P. O, may I so? then I'm satisfied.

Pinch. Come, begin:—*Sir*— [*Dictates.*

Mrs P. Shan't I say, *Dear Sir?*—You know one says always something more than bare *Sir.*

Pinch. Write as I bid you, or I will write whore with this penknife in your face.

Mrs P. Nay, good bud—*Sir*— [*Writes.*

Pinch. *Though I suffered last night your nauseous, loathed kisses and embraces*—Write!

Mrs P. Nay, why should I say so? You know I told you he had a sweet breath.

Pinch. Write!

Mrs P. Let me but put out *loathed.*

Pinch. Write, I say!

Mrs P. Well then. [*Writes.*

Pinch. Let 's see, what have you writ? [*Takes the paper and reads*] *Though I suffered last night your kisses and embraces*—Thou impudent creature! where is *nauseous* and *loathed?*

Mrs P. I can't abide to write such filthy words.

Pinch. Once more write as I'd have you, and question it not, or I will spoil thy writing with this. I will stab out those eyes that cause my mischief. [*Holds up the penknife.*

Mrs P. O Lord! I will.

Pinch. So—so—lets see now—[*Reads*] *Though I suffered last night*

your nauseous, loathed kisses and embraces—go on—*yet I would not have you presume that you shall ever repeat them*—so— [*She writes.*

Mrs P. I have writ it.

Pinch. On, then—*I then concealed myself from your knowledge, to avoid your insolencies*— [*She writes.*

Mrs P. So—

Pinch. The same reason, now I am out of your hands— [*She writes.*

Mrs P. So—

Pinch. Makes me own to you my unfortunate, though innocent frolic, of being in man's clothes. [*She writes.*

Mrs P. So—

Pinch. That you may for evermore cease to pursue her who hates and detests you— [*She writes on.*

Mrs P. So. Heigh!

Pinch. What do you sigh?—*detest you—as much as she loves her husband and her honour*—

Mrs P. I vow, husband, he 'll ne'er believe I should write such a letter.

Pinch. What, he 'd expect a kinder from you? Come, now your name only.

Mrs P. What, shan't I say, *Your most faithful humble servant till death?*

Pinch. No, tormenting fiend!——[*Aside*] Her style, I find, would be very soft. [*Aloud*] Come, wrap it up now, whilst I go fetch wax and a candle; and write on the backside, *For Mr Horner.* [*Exit.*

Mrs P. For Mr Horner.——So, I am glad he has told me his name. Dear Mr Horner! but why should I send thee such a letter that will vex thee, and make thee angry with me?—Well. I will not send it——Ay, but then my husband will kill me——for I see plainly he won't let me love Mr Horner——but what care I for my husband?——I won't, so I won't, send poor Mr Horner such a letter——But then my husband ——but oh, what if I write at bottom my husband made me write it? ——Ay, but then my husband would see 't——Can one have no shift? ah, a London woman would have had a hundred presently. Stay—— what if I should write a letter, and wrap it up like this, and write upon 't too? Ay, but then my husband would see 't—I don't know what to do. ——But yet evads I'll try, so I will——for I will not send this letter to poor Mr Horner, come what will on't.

Dear, sweet Mr Horner. [*Writes and repeats what she writes.*]—so—*my husband would have me send you a base, rude, unmannerly letter; but I won't*—so—*and would have me forbid you loving me; but I won't*—so—*and would have me say to you, I hate you, poor Mr Horner; but I won't tell a lie for him*—there—*for I'm sure if you and I were in the country at cards together*—so—*I could not help treading on your toe under the table*—so—*or rubbing knees with you, and staring in your face, till you saw me*—very well—*and then looking down, and blushing for an hour together*—so—*but I must make haste before my husband comes: and now he*

has taught me to write letters, you shall have longer ones from me, who am, dear, dear, poor, dear Mr Horner, your most humble friend, and servant to command till death— MARGERY PINCHWIFE.

Stay, I must give him a hint at bottom—so—now wrap it up just like t'other—so—now write *For Mr Horner.*—But oh now, what shall I do with it? for here comes my husband.

Re-enter PINCHWIFE.

Pinch. [*Aside*] I have been detained by a sparkish coxcomb, who pretended a visit to me; but I fear 'twas to my wife [*Aloud*] What have you done?

Mrs P. Ay, ay, bud, just now.

Pinch. Let's see't; what d'ye tremble for? what, you would not have it go.

Mrs P. Here—[*Aside*] No, I must not give him that: so I had been served if I had given him this. [*He opens and reads the first letter.*

Pinch. Come, where's the wax and seal?

Mrs P. [*Aside*] Lord, what shall I do now? Nay, then I have it—[*Aloud*] Pray let me see't. Lord, you think me so arrant a fool, I cannot seal a letter; I will do't, so I will. [*Snatches the letter from him, changes it for the other, seals it, and delivers it to him.*

Pinch. Nay, I believe you will learn that, and other things too, which I would not have you.

Mrs P. So, han't I done it curiously? [*Aside*] I think I have; there's my letter going to Mr Horner, since he'll needs have me send letters to folks.

Pinch. 'Tis very well; but I warrant, you would not have it go now.

Mrs P. Yes, indeed, but I would, bud, now.

Pinch. Well, you are a good girl then. Come let me lock you up in your chamber, till I come back; and be sure you come not within three strides of the window when I am gone, for I have a spy in the street. [*Exit Mrs Pinchwife, Pinchwife locks the door.*] At least 'tis fit she thinks so. If we do not cheat women, they'll cheat us, and fraud may be justly used with secret enemies, of which a wife is the most dangerous; and he that has a handsome one to keep, and a frontier town, must provide against treachery, rather than open force. Now I have secured all within, I'll deal with the foe without, with false intelligence. [*Holds up the letter. Exit.*

M, Page 189.

The scene in Murphy's *School for Guardians* (Act ii., last Scene), in which the two servants Peter and Bridget buffet their master, is similar to that between Alain, Georgette, and Arnolphe in Molière's *School for Wives* (Act iv., Scene 4)

OLDCASTLE, PETER, BRIDGET.

Oldcastle. Come hither both. I am not angry; you are no strangers to the affection I bear Mary Ann.

Bridget. No, that's for sure: you love her as well as you do a guinea.

Old. How now, Malapert?

Bri. I am sure Peter said so.

Pet. No, not I for the varsal world!

Old. What's the matter, Numskulls? Listen to me. Watch my house well; and be sure you never let any powdered coxcombs put a foot over the threshold of my door.

Bri. Yes, Sir!

Pet. No, Sir!

Old. But the wily arts of young men! Think of a gay embroidered fop coming to you with a piteous look: "I languish for your mistress; I die in her absence; let me but see her, or else I have one foot in my grave already."

Pet. Be gone about your business, fellow, says I. This is no place for you. My young mistress desires no such trumpery.

Old. Mighty well, Peter, it can't be better. But you, Mrs Bridget, will take some compassion upon a poor dying swain.

Bri. Go farther a field, and set up the sign of the Horns somewhere else, do: no admittance for you here.

Old. Charming, Bridget, charming! you do it wonderfully. But, then, says he, "I'll lie down in the street, and there breathe my last."

Pet. And then I run up to the garret window, and souce a bucket of water on his head.

Old. Excellent! excellent! it will cool his passion for him. Have a bucket of water always ready. Ha! ha! I should laugh to see him streaming like a river-god in the street. I am delighted with you both. But then he comes with his damned bewitching gold. Here, Peter, to drink my health: here Mrs Bridget, to buy you some tea.

Pet. We want none of your dross.

Bri. No, not we. [*Pushing Oldcastle.*

Pet. Go about your business I say. }
Bri. Money is the root of all evil. } [*Both pushing him.*

Old. As I could wish. That's right; never spare me. But, here. says he, here's the money for you. [*Holding out money.*

Pet. I humbly thank your honour. [*Takes it.*

Old. Villain! traitor! [*strikes him*] Is this your virtue at last?

Pet. Law! what's the matter? Was not I to take it?

Old. What have I been labouring all this time?

Pet. But you did not shew the money at first. I could have refused it ever so long, if I had not seen the colour of it.

Old. The way of the world! but you are never to take it. Money is the ruin of the world. It declares war, it patches up a peace, it makes lawyers speak, it makes some folks hold their tongues. Go, and think of all this.

Bri. and Pet. [*Going in a hurry*] Yes, Sir!

Old. And remember you have no business with money.——Come, and shut the street-door after me.

Both. Yes, Sir.

Old. Be sure you never touch a shilling. This Mr Brumpton will be the death of me. [*Exit.*

LA CRITIQUE DE L'ÉCOLE DES FEMMES;

COMÉDIE.

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES CRITICISED;

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT.

(THE ORIGINAL IN PROSE.)

JUNE 1ST, 1663.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

The School for Wives criticised was first brought out at the theatre of the Palais Royal, on the 1st of June, 1663. It can scarcely be called a play, for it is entirely destitute of action. It is simply a reported conversation of "friends in council;" but we cannot be surprised that it had a temporary success on the stage. It was acted as a pendant to *The School for Wives*, and the two were played together, with much profit to the company, thirty-two consecutive times. Molière, in the Preface to *The School for Wives*, mentions that the idea of writing *The School for Wives criticised* was suggested to him by a person of quality, who, it is said, was the Abbé Dubuisson, the *grand introducteur des ruelles* or, in other words, the Master of the Ceremonies to the *Précieuses*. Our author had also just been inscribed on the list of pensions which Louis XIV. allowed to eminent literary men, for a sum of a thousand *livres*.

The happy idea of self-criticism adopted by Molière in this piece has been caught at by many subsequent French writers. Thus we find *la Critique du Légataire*, by Regnard; *la Critique du Philosophe marié*, by Destouches; *le Procès de la Femme juge et partie*, by Montfleury. But in none of these is the subject so ably treated as by Molière, who did not scruple to attack the different cabals leagued against him. Climène is an example of those ladies "whose ears are more chaste than all the rest of their body," and is a preliminary study for Philaminte of the *Femmes Savantes*. The Marquis represents the "noble patron," who judges of a play before he has seen it, who is a critic by virtue of his rank, but not of his knowledge; Lysidas is the envious pedant, who "damns with faint praise," who wishes everything measured according to the rules of Cocker's arithmetic, who employs the little knowledge with which Heaven has afflicted him to hide his own mediocrity, and who afterwards will be farther developed in the *Femmes Savantes* as Trissotin and Vadius. Dorante, the man of sense, is also more fully shown in the Clitandre of the same play.

A few days after the play was produced, it was reported that Lysidas was meant for Boursault, the ridiculous Marquis for the Duke de La Feuillade, whilst it was said that the abbé d'Aubignac was also laughed at; but as Molière himself states in *The School for Wives criticised* (page

262):—"All the ridiculous delineations which are drawn on the stage should be looked on by every one without annoyance. They are public mirrors in which we must never pretend to see ourselves."

Boursault believed, or affected to believe, that Molière intended to pourtray him, and hence replied in the *Portrait du Peintre* which was performed at the hôtel de Bourgogne. Tradition mentions that the Duke de la Feuillade took other means to avenge himslf. He one day met Molière in one of the galleries of the Palace of Versailles. Pretending to be very polite and courteous, he ran towards him, smiling, and whilst embracing him, and rubbing all the while the actor's face against the metal-worked buttons of his coat, he shouted out, "Cream-tart, Molière! Cream-tart!" It is said that Louis XIV. banished the Duke from the Court for some time for this offence, and that he ordered Molière to take anew vengeance upon his enemies. There can be no doubt about the order, for Molière states so expressly in *The Impromptu of Versailles.*

The School for Wives criticised may be taken as Molière's general reply to his critics; for it deals as much with the points of good and bad criticism as with the special features of *The School for Wives.* Indeed, the defence raised, through the mouth of Dorante, of certain passages of the latter play which had been roughly handled by the poet's contemporaries, are perhaps the weakest parts of *The School for Wives criticised;* whereas the generalities which deal with the art and practice of criticism are exceptionally shrewd and pungent.

The School for Wives met with a flattering reception, in the sense that the public was greatly divided as to its merits, and carried on the discussion of it with much warmth, and even bitterness. The play was town-talk for many days; and in this sequel, Molière no doubt reflected the principal arguments of his friends and of his opponents. If he reflected them aright, he did well to preserve them in this form, side by side; for Dorante, Urania, and their dissembling ally Eliza, have infinitely the best of the discussion, whether we regard them as champions of Molière only, or as vindicators of the highest principles of dramatic criticism in general. Perhaps "School for Critics" would better describe the most valuable half of the piece.

Molière dedicated *The School for Wives criticised* to the Queen-mother, in the following words:—

MADAM,—I very well know that your Majesty has no need of our dedications; and that those pretended duties of which people elegantly tell you they acquit themselves, are marks of respect with which, to speak the truth, you could very willingly dispense. But yet I have the boldness to dedicate to you *The School*

[1] Anne of Austria, eldest daughter of Philip III., King of Spain, wife of Louis XIII., and mother of Louis XIV., was born in 1602, and died the 20th of January 1666, sixty-four years old. She did not long survive the "happy recovery" Moliere congratulates her upon.

for Wives criticised; and I could not omit this opportunity of testifying to your Majesty my joy upon that happy recovery, which restores to us the greatest and best Princess in the world, and which promises us in you long years of vigorous health. As everyone regards things from his own point of view, I rejoice in this general satisfaction, that I may again be able to have the honour of diverting your Majesty. You, Madam, who so well prove that true devotion is not opposed to innocent diversions; who, from your lofty thoughts and important occupations, descend so kindly to the pleasure of our performances, and who do not disdain to smile with the same mouth with which you pray to God so devoutly, I flatter my mind, I say, with the expectation of this glory; I await that moment with the utmost impatience; and, when I shall enjoy that happiness, it will be the greatest satisfaction in the world to,—MADAM, *Your Majesty's most humble, most obedient, and most obliged servant,*

MOLIÈRE.

Thomas Brown, of Shipnal, in Yorkshire, so well known for his free and easy writings, wrote an imitation of *The School for Wives criticised*, which he calls, "*The Stage-Beaux toss'd in a Blanket, or Hypocrisie à la mode;* Expos'd in a true picture of Jerry . . . a pretending scourge to the English Stage, A Comedy with a Prologue on Occasional Conformity; being a full Explanation of the Poussin Doctor's book; and an Epilogue on the Reformers. Spoken at the Theatre-Royal in Drury Lane, with the motto, 'Simulant Curios et Bacchanalia vivunt,—Juv.' London, Printed and Sold by J. Nott, near Stationers' Hall, 1704." This piece consists of three acts, while the French has only one. It is a satire against Jeremy Collier, on account of his *Short View of the Immorality and Prophaneness of the English Stage*, and was never acted. It was severely chastised and answered in sermons and pamphlets; amongst others, in "*Serious Reflections on the Scandalous Abuse and Effects of the Stage*, in a Sermon preached at Bristol, Jany. 7th, 1704-5, by A. Bedford," at the end of which is printed "a copy of the Presentation of the Grand Jury to Mayor, Aldermen, and Justices of the Peace, asking them to forbid the Acting of Plays," and praising them "for having endeavoured to suppress Musick-houses, and other Lewd and Disorderly Houses, Tipling, or Idle walking on the Lord's Day;" also in *A Representation of the Impiety and Immorality of the English Stage*, 1704, A. Bedford; in *A Second Advertisement concerning the Profaneness of the Playhouse;* and in *The Evil and Danger of Stage Plays in almost* 2000 *instances taken from the plays of the two last years*, by A. Bedford, 1706. Again, in *A Serious Remonstrance in behalf of the Christian Religion against the horrid Blasphemies and Impieties which are still used in the English Play-Houses, etc., from almost* 7000 *instances, taken out of the Plays of the present Century*, 1719, by A. Bedford; and finally, in *The Absolute unlawfulness of the Stage Entertainment fully demonstrated*, by W. Law, A.M., 1726. *The Stage-Beaux* is dedicated to Christopher Rich, patentee of the Theatre Royal, in a humorous epistle, in which Themistocles, Milton, and even Collier himself are mentioned as friends of the Drama, and in which it is stated that "the

stage exposes Knaves and Fools, Misers, Prodigals, Affectation, Hypocrisie, etc., and that has provoked some to be its zealous Foes, under the pretended Name of Sanctity and Religion." The Prologue, spoken by "one dress'd one-half like a Noncon Parson, and the other like an Orthodox Divine," opens thus:—

> "My Dress is Odd, but yet 'tis Alamode,
> Invented to unite Mammon with God.
> This Side is Real, and full of Native Spite;
> This I put on to get some Money by't.
> This Side is fill'd with Sanctify'd Grimace;
> This is more Debonair in hopes of Place.
> This Obstinate against Religious Forms;
> This, brib'd by Gain, occasionally conforms.
> Occasional conforming is our Darling,
> Which if y'Attaque, you set us All a Snarling."

The character in Brown's play which is not in the French comedy is Sir Jerry Witwind, a pert, talkative, half-witted coxcomb, an arrant hypocrite, and a most immoral man,—a rather free imitation of Tartuffe, whose very words he sometimes employs, and whose worst actions he exaggerates at the end of the third act. The two last acts of the *Stage Beaux* are chiefly occupied with attacks on Collier, some of which are very amusing; but the first act contains a very fair imitation of a few scenes of *The School for Wives criticised*, which we give in the Appendix.

Wycherley has also borrowed from *The School for Wives criticised* a scene of his *Plain-Dealer*, which, as a whole, is partly taken from Molière's *Misanthrope*. In the part thus imitated he tries to defend *The Country Wife*, and boldly states that "a lady may call her own modesty in question by publicly cavilling with the poets;" but Olivia's defence of the play is as bad as *The Country Wife* itself. She reminds us of a certain French wit of the last century, called Duclos, who one day stated in the presence of some ladies that respectable women might hear any stories without being shocked; and then he went on relating some, which were bad enough, and was going to tell some which were even worse, when one of the ladies present stopped him by saying, "Monsieur Duclos, you really believe us to be more respectable than we are."

In the Appendix will be found what the English dramatist has borrowed.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE MARQUIS.

DORANTE, *or* THE CHEVALIER.

LYSIDAS, *a poet.*

GALOPIN, *a lackey.*

URANIA.

ELIZA.[2]

CLIMÈNE.

Scene—PARIS, IN THE HOUSE OF URANIA.

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[2] Eliza is the first part created by Molière's wife, who had only been married about fifteen months. Our author always wrote for his wife parts in which sharp sayings, caustic wit, and a certain amount of coquetry are to be found. Madame Molière begins as Eliza, and ends as Célimène, in *The Misanthrope.*

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES CRITICISED.

(*LA CRITIQUE DE L'ÉCOLE DES FEMMES.*)

SCENE I.

URANIA, ELIZA.

Ur. What! cousin, has no one been to visit you?

El. Not a soul.

Ur. I am really astonished that we have both of us been alone the whole day.

El. It astonishes me, too; for it is by no means usual; and your house, thank Heaven! is the ordinary resort of all the loungers at Court.

Ur. The afternoon, to be candid, seems very tedious to me.

El. And I have found it very short.

Ur. That, cousin, is because witty people love solitude.

El. Oh! I am not one of those witty people. You know I have no pretensions to that.

Ur. For my part, I confess I like company.

El. So do I, but I like it select; and the number of stupid visits we have to endure is, amongst others, the reason why I often take pleasure in being alone.

Ur. It is an over-refinement, not to be able to bear any but select people.

El. And it is too indiscriminate a complaisance to bear all sorts of people with indifference.

Ur. I relish those who are sensible, and amuse myself with those who talk nonsense

El. In truth, those who talk nonsense do not proceed far without wearying you; and most of those folks are no longer amusing after the second visit. But, talking of your nonsensical people, will you not rid me of your troublesome Marquis? Do you mean always to leave him on my hands, and do you think that I can hold out for ever against his everlasting quips?[3]

Ur. It is the language of fashion, and they make merry over it at Court.

El. So much the worse for those who do, and who rack their brains all day long to talk such an obscure jargon. A fine thing, to introduce into the conversation of the Louvre their stale *double entendres*, raked together from the kennels of the markets and of the Place Maubert![4] A pretty style of jesting for courtiers, and for a man to display his wit by coming up to you, and saying, "Madame, you are in the Place Royale; every one sees you three leagues from Paris,

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[3] The original has *turlupinades*. Turlupins were certain heretics, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, condemned by the Roman Catholic Church; hence the name, after some time, was given to any bad joker. There was an actor at the hôtel de Bourgogne, Henri Legrand, who died in 1634, and was a famous *turlupin*. After the performance of *The School for Wives criticised*, the Marquises affected the name of *turlupins*.

[4] The language of the markets, *halles*, is not very choice, something like "Billingsgate." The Place Maubert is a square in Paris, at the foot of the Montagne St Geneviève, in the thickly populated neighbourhood of the quartier Mouffetard. Various origins are adduced for its name, but the most feasible seems to me this one. In the fourteenth century, a celebrated German professor of Philosophy settled in Paris, and met in a short time with such a great success that no building could be found large enough to contain his audience. He therefore delivered his lectures in the open air. His name was maître Albert Groot, (Albertus Magnus) hence the contraction Maubert for maître Albert. After this and until very lately, in fact until the improvements inaugurated by the Empire took a corner of it away to make room for the Boulevard St Germain, it was a rendezvous for mountebanks, bear-leaders, and fire-eaters, a sort of fair as is now the Place de la Bastille, hence the allusion to the *double entendres*.

for every one is pleased to see you;" because Bonneuil is a village three leagues off![5] Is it not very gallant and very witty? And ought they not to be proud for having hit upon such pretty puns?

Ur. At the same time, they do not say this as a piece of wit; for most of those who affect this language know themselves that it is ridiculous.

El. Worse still, to be at such pains to talk nonsense, and to be sorry jokers on purpose! I think them less excusable for this; and if I were their judge, I know well to what I would condemn all these gentry, the punsters.

Ur. A truce to this subject, which seems to excite you; let us talk of Dorante, who, methinks, is long in coming to the supper we are to take together.

El. Perhaps he has forgotten it, and . . .

SCENE II.

URANIA, ELIZA, GALOPIN.[6]

Gal. Madam, Climène has come to see you.

Ur. Oh! bless me, here is a visit!

El. You complained of being alone; so Heaven punishes you for it.

Ur. Quick! go and tell her I am not at home.

Gal. She has already been told that you are in.

Ur. Who is the fool that told her?

Gal. I, madam.

Ur. Deuce take the little rascal! I shall teach you to give answers on your own behalf!

Gal. I go and tell her, madam, that you do not wish to be at home.

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[5] There is a pun in the original which cannot be translated: *chacun vous voit de bon œil* means "every one is pleased to see you," but *Bonneuil* is also a village three leagues from Paris.

[6] See Appendix, Note A.

Ur. Stay, you stupid! As the mischief is done, let her come up.

Gal. She is still talking to a man in the street.

Ur. Ah! cousin, how annoying this visit is just now!

El. True; the lady is naturally rather troublesome. I always disliked her much; and, though she is a lady of rank, she is the most stupid creature that ever pretended to sense.

Ur. The term is rather strong.

El. Come, come; she richly deserves it, and more too, if justice were done her. Is there any one that better deserves to go by the name of a *précieuse*[7] than she, to use the word in its worst sense?

Ur. She disclaims the epithet, at all events.

El. So she does. She disclaims the epithet, but not the thing; for she is finical from head to foot, and the most formal creature in the world. Her whole body appears to be out of joint, and the motions of her hips, her shoulders and her head seem to go like a piece of clock-work. She always assumes a languishing and silly tone, grimaces to make her mouth appear small, and rolls her eyes to make them seem large.

Ur. Softly, pray. If she should happen to overhear . . .

El. No, no; she is not coming up yet. I shall never forget that evening when she was anxious to see Damon, on account of his reputation, and of the books he had published. You know the man, and his natural indolence in keeping up a conversation. She had invited him to supper as a wit, and never did he appear such a fool, amidst half-a-dozen people for whom she had meant him to be a treat, and who stared at him with all their might, as if he ought not to be made like other men. They all thought he was there to entertain the company with witty

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[7] See Vol. I., page 209, *The Pretentious Young Ladies.*

sayings; that every word from his mouth was to be something extraordinary; that he ought to deliver an impromptu repartee on everything that was said, and not even to ask for a glass of wine without uttering a witticism. But he took them in by his silence; and the lady was as ill-pleased with him as I was with her.

Ur. Be quiet! I will go and receive her at the door.

El. One word more.—I wish she was married to the Marquis we spoke of. What a fine match it would be, between a *précieuse* and a *turlupin!*[8]

Ur. Will you be quiet! Here she comes.

SCENE III.

CLIMÈNE, URANIA, ELIZA, GALOPIN.[9]

Ur. How long you have been . . .

Cl. Oh! for Heaven's sake, my dear, make them bring me a chair immediately!

Ur. [*To Galopin*] An arm-chair here, quick!

Cl. Oh, good Heaven!

Ur. What can be the matter?

Cl. I can bear it no longer.

Ur. What ails you?

Cl. I am going to faint.

Ur. Have you got the vapours?

Cl. No.

Ur. Shall I unlace you?

Cl. O lord! no.—Oh!

Ur. What is your ailment, then? When did it seize you?

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[8] See page 244, note 3.

[9] See Appendix, Note B.

Cl. Above three hours ago; and I brought it from the Palais Royal.[10]

Ur. How?

Cl. I have just seen, as a punishment for my sins, that villainous rhapsody *The School for Wives.* I feel still a twinge from the fainting-fit which it gave me; I believe I shall not be myself again for a fortnight.[11]

El. Just see how our ailments arise without our suspecting it!

Ur. I do not know what stuff my cousin and I are made of; but we were at the same play the day before yesterday, and we both came away well and hearty.

Cl. What! have you seen it?

Ur. Yes, and listened to every word.

Cl. And did you not almost go into convulsions, my dear?

Ur. I am not so delicate, thank Heaven! For my part, I fancy that this comedy would be more likely to cure folks, than to make them sick.

Cl. Oh, good Heaven! What are you saying? Can such a proposition be advanced by any one who has the smallest stock of common sense? Do you think that everyone can, with impunity, insult reason, as you do? And is there in very truth a mind so hungry for a joke as to relish the silly things with which this play is seasoned? I confess, for my part, I could not find the least wit in the whole of it. *Children through the ear* was, to my thinking, in execrable taste;[12] the *cream tart*[13] turned me sick; and I thought I must have vomited when I heard *broth*[14] mentioned.

El. Heavens! most elegantly spoken! I was inclined to think the piece good; but the lady's eloquence is so per-

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[10] Molière's troop was then playing at the Palais Royal.

[11] See Appendix, Note C.

[12] See page 156, Act i., Scene 2. [13] See page 154, Act i., Scene 1.

[14] See page 166, Act ii., Scene 3.

suasive, and gives such an agreeable turn to things, that I must be of her opinion, in spite of myself.

Ur. For my part, I am not so easily moved. To be candid, I look on this play as one of the most diverting which the author has produced.

Cl. Oh! I pity you for talking so. I cannot let you display so much bluntness of perception. Can a virtuous person find anything pleasant in a piece that keeps her modesty in continual alarm, and sullies the imagination at every turn?

El. What a nice way of speaking! What a terrible hand you are at criticism, madam; and how I pity poor Molière in having you for an enemy!

Cl. Believe me, dear, correct your judgment in good earnest; for the sake of your honour, do not openly say that this comedy has pleased you.

Ur. I cannot think what you found in it to shock your modesty.

Cl. Good lack! all of it. I do maintain it for a fact that a gentlewoman cannot see it without confusion; so much impropriety and nastiness did I find in it.

Ur. You must have a special discernment for impropriety. I own I could see none.

Cl. It is undoubtedly because you would not see it; for, in short, all its impropriety, thank Heaven! is plain enough. It has not the least cloak to hide it; and the boldest eyes are shocked by its nakedness.

El. Oh!

Cl. Ah! ah! ah!

Ur. Yet once more, if you please, point out to me some of the improprieties you speak of.

Cl. Alas! is it necessary to point them out?

Ur. Yes. I ask of you but one passage that shocked you very much.

Cl. Do you wish any other than the scene with that Agnès, when she tells what Horace took from her?

Ur. And what do you find improper in that?

Cl. Ah!

Ur. Please.

Cl. Fie!

Ur. But . . .

Cl. I have nothing more to say to you.

Ur. For my part, I see no harm in it.

Cl. So much the worse for you.

Ur. So much the better, I think. I look at things as they are shown to me, and do not turn them round to look at what should not be seen.

Cl. But a woman's modesty . . .

Ur. A woman's modesty does not consist in grimacing. It ill becomes us to be over-wise. Affectation of this kind is worse than anything; and I see nothing more ridiculous than that delicate honour which takes everything amiss, gives a bad meaning to the most innocent words, and is startled at shadows. Believe me, those who make so much ado are not esteemed the most honest women. On the contrary, their mysterious severity and affected grimaces provoke public animadversion upon the actions of their own lives. The world is only too glad to discover anything to carp at. To give you a proof, there were some ladies at this comedy the other day; in a box opposite to ours, who, by their affected gestures throughout the piece, by averting their heads and hiding[15] their faces, gave rise to a hundred impertinent remarks upon their behaviour, which would never have been uttered but for that; one of the footmen even

[15] There are no nouns in the French language for "averting," and "hiding;" Molière coins here *détournement* and *cachement*, but these words have not been adopted.

cried out aloud that their ears were more chaste than all the rest of their bodies.

Cl. In short, we ought to be blind throughout this play, and pretend not to see anything in it.

Ur. We ought not to see what is not there.

Cl. Do not tell me. I maintain that the improprieties are glaring.

Ur. And I remain still of a different mind.

Cl. What! Is not modesty plainly shocked by Agnès in the passage we are speaking about?

Ur. No, truly. She does not say a word which is indelicate in itself; and if you will understand something else, it is you who create the impropriety, and not she, for she only speaks of the ribbon that was taken from her.

Cl. Oh yes, the ribbon! But that *the*, when she checks herself, is not put there for nothing. Odd ideas are suggested by this *the*. That *the* is tremendously scandalous. Say what you will, you cannot defend the coarseness of this *the*.

El. True, cousin, I am with this lady against that *the*. That *the* is excessively coarse; you are wrong to defend that *the*.

Cl. Its obscenity is unbearable.

El. What word do you use, madam?

Cl. Obscenity, madam.

El. Oh, good gracious! obscenity. I do not know the meaning of the word; but I think it very nice![16]

Cl. There! You see how your own relation takes my part.

Ur. Ah! she is a chatter-box, who does not speak as she thinks. Do not trust her much, if you will take my advice.

El. Oh! you wicked creature, to try to make this lady

[16] *Obscénité* was then in French a new word; it was employed for the first time by the translators of the Bible, called *traducteurs de Mons.*

suspect me. Just think what would become of me, if she were to believe what you say. Could I be so unfortunate, Madam, as to have you think this of me?

Cl. No, no. I do not mind her words, and I believe that you are more sincere than she says.

El. Oh, you are quite right, Madam; and you do me justice when you believe that I think you the most engaging person in the world; that I enter into all your sentiments, and am charmed with every expression that comes from your lips.

Cl. Indeed, I speak without affectation.

El. We can see that, Madam, quite well; and everything about you is natural. Your words, the tone of your voice, your gait, your actions, and your dress, have an indescribable air of fashion about them, which is quite enchanting. I study you with my eyes and ears; and I am so full of you, that I strive to ape you and imitate you in everything.

Cl. You are bantering me, Madam.

El. Pardon me, Madam. Who could banter you?

Cl. I am not a good model, Madam.

El. Oh, yes, Madam.

Cl. You flatter me, Madam.

El. Not at all, Madam.

Cl. Spare me, I beg you, Madam.

El. I do spare you, Madam, and I say not half of what I think, Madam.

Cl. Ah, good Heavens! let us stop it, I beseech you. You throw me into a dreadful confusion. [*To Urania*] There, you see we are both against you, and obstinacy so ill becomes clever people . . .

SCENE IV.

THE MARQUIS, CLIMÈNE, URANIA, ELIZA, GALOPIN.[17]

Gal. [*At the door*] Stop sir, please!

Mar. Do you not know me, fellow?

Gal. Ay, I know you; but you shall not come in.

Mar. What a noise you are making, little lackey.

Gal. It is not fair to wish to get in where you are not wanted.

Mar. I wish to see your mistress.

Gal. She is not at home, I tell you.

Mar. Why, she is in her room there!

Gal. That may be; she is there, but she is not at home.

Ur. What is the matter?

Mar. Your lackey, Madam, is playing the fool.

Gal. Madam, I am telling him you are not at home, and he will insist on coming in.

Ur. And why did you tell this gentleman that I am not at home?

Gal. You scolded me the other day for telling him you were at home.

Ur. The insolent fellow! Pray, sir, do not attend to what he says. He is a little stupid creature, who takes you for some one else.

Mar. I saw as much, Madam; and, had it not been out of respect for you, I should have taught him to distinguish people of quality.

El. My cousin is much obliged to you for this deference.

Ur. [*To Galop'n*] Bring a chair there, impertinent

Gal. Is there not one there?

Ur. Bring it nearer! [*Galopin pushes it rudely and exit.*]

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[17] See Appendix, Note D.

SCENE V.

THE MARQUIS, CLIMÈNE, URANIA, ELIZA.[18]

Mar. Your little lackey, madam, has a special contempt for me.

El. He would certainly be much to blame.

Mar. It is possibly because I pay interest on my ill looks. Ha, ha, ha! [*laughing.*]

El. Age will make him know people of fashion better.

Mar. Of what were you speaking, ladies, when I interrupted you?

Ur. Of the comedy, *The School for Wives.*

Mar. I have just come from it.

Cl. Well, sir, pray how do you like it?

Mar. It is altogether silly.

Cl. Oh I am delighted to hear you say so!

Mar. The most wretched piece imaginable. What the deuce! I could hardly get a seat. I thought I should have been crushed to death at the door, and I was never so trampled upon. Pray see what a state my rolls and ribbons are in!

El. That certainly speaks volumes against *The School for Wives,* and you justly condemn it.

Mar. Never, I think, was such a wretched play composed.

Ur. Ah, here is Dorante, whom we were expecting.

SCENE VI.

DORANTE, THE MARQUIS, CLIMÈNE, ELIZA, URANIA.[19]

Dor. Pray do not move, and do not break off your conversation. You are on a subject which, for four days, has been the common talk of Paris; and never was anything more

[18] See Appendix, Note E.

[19] See Appendix, Note F.

amusing than the various judgments that are passed upon it. For, indeed, I have heard this play condemned by some for the very things that others most praise.

Ur. The Marquis speaks very ill of it.

Mar. It is true. I think it detestable, detestable, egad! to the last degree detestable; what you may call detestable!

Dor. And I, dear Marquis, think the judgment detestable.

Mar. How, Chevalier, do you mean to vindicate this play?

Dor. Yes, I do mean to vindicate it.

Mar. Egad, I warrant it to be detestable.

Dor. That guarantee would not be accepted in the city.[20] But Marquis, for what reason, pray, is this comedy as you describe it?

Mar. Why detestable?

Dor. Ay.

Mar. It is detestable—because it is detestable.

Dor. After that, there is not a word to be said; the cause is ended. But still, instruct us, and tell us its faults.

Mar. How can I? I did not so much as give myself the trouble to listen to it. But yet I assure you I never saw anything so wretched, as I hope to be saved; and Dorilas, who sat opposite to me, was of my mind.

Dor. The authority is weighty, and you are well backed.

Mar. You have only to mark the continual bursts of

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[20] The original has *la caution n'est pas bourgeoise*, a saying which owes its origin to the ancient custom of giving a certain number of the chief-citizens of a town as hostages to a conqueror; hence it came to mean "a security as good as that of any well known townsman." Molière uses the same term in *The Pretentious Young Ladies*, Vol. I., page 232, when Mascarille says: "I shall . . . expect very good security that they do me no mischief."

laughter from the pit. I wish no more to prove its utter worthlessness.

Dor. You are then, Marquis, one of those grand gentlemen who will not allow the pit to have common sense, and who would be vexed to join in their laugh, though it were at the best thing conceivable? The other day, I saw one of our friends on the stage, who made himself ridiculous by this. He heard the piece out with the most gloomy seriousness imaginable; and whatever tickled others made him frown. At every burst of laughter he shrugged his shoulders and cast a look of pity on the pit; occasionally, too, he glanced contemptuously at them, saying in an audible voice, "Laugh away, pit, laugh away!"[21] Our friend's annoyance was a second comedy. He acted bravely before the whole house, and everyone agreed that he could not have played his part better. Pray, note, Marquis and your friends as well, that common sense has no fixed place at a theatre; that the difference between half a louis and fifteen sous[22] makes none whatever in the matter of good taste; that whether we sit or stand, we may pass a bad judgment; and that, in short, speaking generally, I would place considerable reliance on the applause of the pit, because, amongst those who go there, many are capable of judging the piece according to rule, whilst others judge it as they ought, allowing themselves to be guided by circumstances, having neither a blind prejudice, nor an affected complaisance, nor a ridiculous refinement.

Mar. So, sir, you are a defender of the pit! Egad, I am glad of it; I shall not fail to let them know that you are one of their friends. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

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[21] The name of this fine gentleman has come down to us; he was called Plapisson, and used the words which Dorante mentions, at the representation of *The School for Wives*.

[22] See Vol. I., Prefatory Memoir, page xxv., note 8.

Dor. Laugh as much as you like. I am for good sense, and I cannot bear the brain-bubbles of our Mascarille-Marquises.[23] It drives me mad to see people make themselves ridiculous, in spite of their rank; folks who always decide, and talk boldly of everything without knowledge: who will shout with pleasure at the bad parts of a comedy, and never applaud those which are good; who, when they see a picture, or go to a concert, blame and praise all by rule of contraries; who pick up artistic shibboleths wherever they can, get them by heart, and never fail to twist and misplace them. Zounds, gentlemen, hold your peace. Since Heaven has not blessed you with the knowledge of one single thing, do not make yourselves laughing-stocks to those who hear you; and remember, that, if you never open your mouths, you may perhaps be taken for clever men.

Mar. Egad, sir, you are carrying this . . .

Dor. Why, Marquis, I am not speaking to you. I am addressing a round dozen of those gentry who disgrace courtiers by their nonsensical manners, and make people believe we are all alike. For my part, I shall disclaim it as much as I can. I shall fall foul of them whenever we meet, until they grow wise at last.

Mar. Now tell me, sir, do you think Lysander has wit?

Dor. Yes, doubtless, and a good deal of it.

Ur. That is what no one can deny.

Mar. Ask him what he thinks of *The School for Wives.* You shall see he will tell you he does not like it.

Dor. Upon my word, there are plenty who are spoiled by too much wit, who see things imperfectly, because the light is too strong, and who would even be very sorry to be

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[23] See Vol. I., *The Pretentious Young Ladies*, page 209.

of other people's opinion, so that they may have the glory of passing judgment themselves.[24]

Ur. It is true. Our friend is doubtless one of those people. He must be first in his opinion, and would have others wait respectfully for his decision. All applause which precedes his own is an outrage on his enlightenment, which he avenges openly by taking the other side. He expects people to consult him in all questions of wit: and I am sure that if the author had shown him his play before he let the public see it, he would have thought it the finest in the world.

Mar. And what do you say of the Marchioness Araminta, who declares *The School for Wives* everywhere dreadful, and says she never could endure the improprieties of which it is full?

Dor. I say that this is of a piece with the character she assumes, and that some folks make themselves ridiculous by affecting too much honour. Witty, no doubt, she is, but she has followed the bad example of those who, being in the decline of life, wish to replace by some means or other what they have lost, and fancy that grimaces of fastidious prudery will serve instead of youth and beauty. The lady in question carries it farther than any one; her scrupulous ingenuity finds obscenity where no one would ever have seen it. I hear that these scruples go the length of disfiguring our language; and that there are scarcely any words in it of which our lady's severity will not dock either head or tail, on account of the immodest syllables she finds in them.[25]

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[24] Compare, in Vol. III. in *The Misanthrope* (Act ii. Scene 5), the description of Damis by Célimène.

[25] This idea is also developed by Molière in *The Countess of Escarbagnas* (Scene 19), and in *The Blue Stockings* (Act iii. Scene 2). Both these plays will be found in the sixth volume.

Ur. What a wag you are, Chevalier!

Mar. So, Chevalier, you think to defend your play by satirising those who condemn it?

Dor. By no means; but I think that this lady is scandalised without reason . . .

El. Gently, Chevalier; there may be other ladies of the same mind.

Dor. I know, at all events, that you are not; and that when you saw this play . . .

El. True, but I have changed my opinion, and this lady [*pointing to Climène*] supports hers by such convincing reasons, that she has won me over to her side.

Dor. [*To Climène*] Oh! Madam, I beg your pardon; and if you will, I shall for your sake unsay all that I have said.

Cl. I will not have it for my sake, but for reason's sake: for indeed this piece, if you look at it properly, is quite indefensible, and I cannot imagine . . .

Ur. Ah, here is Mr Lysidas, the author. He comes just in time for this discussion. Mr Lysidas, take a chair, and sit down here.

SCENE VII.

LYSIDAS, CLIMÈNE, URANIA, ELIZA, DORANTE, THE MARQUIS.

Lys. Madam, I am rather late; but I was obliged to read my piece at the house of the Marchioness, of whom I spoke to you; the praise bestowed on it kept me an hour longer than I anticipated.

El. Praise has a great charm to delay an author.

Ur. Sit down, then, Mr Lysidas; we shall read your play after supper.

Lys. All who were there are coming to the first representation, and have promised to do their duty as they ought.

Ur. I believe it. But pray, once more, please to sit

down. We are engaged on a subject which I shall be glad we should pursue.

Lys. I trust, Madam, that you will also take a box for that day.

Ur. We shall see. Pray let us go on with our conversation.

Lys. I warn you, Madam, that they are nearly all taken.

Ur. That is capital. Now I was wanting you when you came, and every one here was against me.

El. [*To Urania, and pointing to Dorante*] He was on your side at first, but now [*pointing to Climène*] that he knows that Climène is at the head of the opposite party, I fancy you may just look for other aid.

Cl. No, no; I would not have him neglect your cousin, and I will allow his wit to be on the side of his heart.

Dor. With this permission, Madam, I shall make bold to defend myself.

Ur. But first, let us know somewhat of Lysidas's mind.

Lys. Upon what, Madam?

Ur. On the subject of *The School for Wives.*

Lys. Ah—h!

Dor. What do you think of it?

Lys. I have nothing to say on that head. You know that, amongst us authors, we must speak of each other's works with great circumspection.

Dor. But still, between ourselves, what do you think of this play?

Lys. I, Sir?

Ur. Tell us your candid opinion.

Lys. I think it very fine.

Dor. Really?

Lys. Really. Why not? Is it not indeed the finest conceivable?

Dor. Hum, hum; you are a wicked fellow, Mr Lysidas. You do not speak as you think.

Lys. Pardon me.

Dor. Oh dear, I know you. Do not dissemble.

Lys. I, Sir?

Dor. I see clearly that you praise the piece only through politeness, and that, at the bottom of your heart, you agree with the many who think it bad.

Lys. Ha, ha, ha!

Dor. Come, confess that this comedy is a wretched thing.

Lys. True, it is not admired by connoisseurs.

Mar. Upon my word, Chevalier, you have got it! You are paid for your raillery. Ha, ha, ha!

Dor. Laugh away, dear Marquis, laugh away.

Mar. You see we have the learned on our side.

Dor. It is true. Lysidas's judgment is worth consideration. But he will excuse me if I do not yield for all that; and since I have presumed to defend myself against this lady's opinions [*pointing to Climène*], he will not take it amiss if I oppose his.

El. What! when you see this lady, the Marquis, and Mr Lysidas against you, dare you still resist? Fie, what bad manners!

Cl. For my part, what confounds me is that sensible people can take it into their heads to defend the stupidities of this piece.

Mar. Egad, Madam, it is wretched from beginning to end.

Dor. That is soon said, Marquis. There is nothing more easy than to cut the matter short in that way; and I do not see anything that can stand against the sovereignty of your decisions.

Mar. Gad, all the other actors who went to see it spoke all the ill they could of it.

Dor. Oh! I will not say another word. You are right, Marquis. Since the other actors speak ill of it, we

must certainly believe them. They are all discerning gentlemen, and speak disinterestedly. There is no more to be said. I give in.

Cl. Give in or not, I am sure you will never persuade me to endure the immodesties of this play, any more than the rude satires on women which are to be found in it.

Ur. For my part, I shall be careful not to be offended, and to take nothing to myself that is said in it. Satire of this kind is aimed directly at habits, and only hits individuals by rebound. Let us not apply to ourselves the points of general censure; let us profit by the lesson, if possible, without assuming that we are spoken against. All the ridiculous delineations which are drawn on the stage should be looked on by every one without annoyance. They are public mirrors, in which we must never pretend to see ourselves. To bruit it about that we are offended at being hit, is to state openly that we are at fault.

Cl. As for me, I do not speak of these things for any part I may have in them; I think I live in such a manner before the world as not to fear being looked for in a picture of ill-behaved women.

El. Certainly, Madam, we will never look for you there. Your conduct is sufficiently well known, and these are things that no one thinks of discussing.

Ur. [*To Climène*] Madam, I said nothing that could apply to you; my words, like the satire of a comedy, are confined to generalities.

Cl. I do not doubt it, Madam. But let us no longer dwell on this episode. I do not know how you take the insults cast upon our sex in a certain part of the play; for my part, I own I am in a terrible passion to hear this impertinent author call us *bipeds*.[26]

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[26] See *The School for Wives*, Act v., Scene 4, page 204.

Ur. Do you not see that it is a ridiculous character he makes to speak so?

Dor. And besides, Madam, do you not know that the reproaches of lovers never offend; that it is pretty much the same with furious, as with mawkish lovers; and that on such occasions the strangest words, and worse than strange, are often taken as marks of affection by the very persons who receive them?

El. Say what you will, I cannot digest that, any more than the *broth* and *cream tart*, of which this lady was just speaking.

Mar. Oh! Upon my word, yes; *cream tart!* That is what I was saying; *cream tart!* How I thank you, Madam, for reminding me of *cream tart!* Are there apples enough in Normandy[27] for *cream tart?* *Cream tart*, egad, *cream tart!*

Dor. Well, what do you mean with your *cream tart?*

Mar. 'Sdeath! *Cream tart*, Chevalier!

Dor. But what?

Mar. *Cream tart!*

Dor. Let us have your reasons.

Mar. *Cream tart!*

Ur. But I think you should explain your meaning.

Mar. *Cream tart*, Madam!

Ur. What do you find there to object to?

Mar. I? Nothing!—*Cream tart!*

Ur. Oh! I give it up.

El. My lord goes the right way to work, and gives it you nicely. But I wish Mr Lysidas would finish, and give them a touch or two in his fashion.

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[27] Normandy is especially an apple-growing country; hence the allusion to the custom of throwing cooked or raw apples at the actors who displease the public.

Lys. It is not my wont to find fault. I am very indulgent to the works of other people. But, indeed, without any offence to the friendship which the Chevalier bears to the author, it must be owned that comedies of this kind are not genuine comedies, and that there is a vast difference between these trifles and the beauty of serious pieces. Yet, every one gives into it nowadays; nothing else is run after; we find a lamentable solitude at great productions, whilst these stupid plays have all Paris after them. My heart, I own, bleeds at it sometimes; it is a scandal to all France.

Cl. It is true that people's taste is strangely corrupted in this matter, and that the age is getting very low.[28]

El. Oh, that is exquisite again—*getting very low.* Did you invent that, Madam?

Cl. Ay!

El. I thought so.

Dor. So you think, Lysidas, that all the wit and beauty are to be found in serious poems, and that comic pieces are trifles which deserve no praise?

Ur. I certainly do not think so. Tragedy no doubt is very fine when it is well written; but comedy has also its charms, and I believe that one is no less difficult than the other.

Dor. Assuredly, Madam; and as to the difficulty, if you should rather set it on the side of comedy, perhaps you would not be far wrong. Indeed, I think that it is much easier to soar with grand sentiments, to brave fortune in verse, to arraign destiny and reproach the Gods, than to broach ridicule in a fit manner, and to make the faults of all mankind seem pleasant on the stage. When you paint

[28] The original has *s'encanailler*, a word which had only lately been coined by the Marchioness de Maulny, one of the *précieuses*.

heroes you can do as you like. These are fancy portraits, in which we do not look for a resemblance; you have only to follow your soaring imagination, which often neglects the true in order to attain the marvellous. But when you paint men, you must paint after nature. We expect resemblance in these portraits; you have done nothing, if you do not make us recognise the people of your day. In a word, in serious pieces, it suffices, to escape blame, to speak good sense, and to write well. But this is not enough in comedy. You must be merry; and it is a difficult undertaking to make gentle folks laugh.

Cl. I think I am one of the gentle folks; and yet I did not find cause for laughter in all I saw.

Mar. Upon my word, no more did I!

Dor. Oh, you, Marquis—I am not astonished. That was because you found no puns in it.

Lys. Faith, sir, what we find there is not much better; all the jokes in this comedy are to my mind a little insipid.

Dor. The Court did not think so.

Lys. Ah, sir, the Court?

Dor. Pray, finish, Mr Lysidas. I see you mean to say that the Court is no judge in these matters; and this is the usual refuge of you gentlemen authors, in the scant success of your own works, to accuse the injustice of the age, and the want of discernment of the courtiers. Be assured, Mr Lysidas, that courtiers have as good eyes as other people; that folks who wear Venice lace and feathers may be as acute as those who wear a bob-wig and a little all-round cravat; that the grand test of all your plays is the judgment of the Court; that you must study its taste, in order to find the art of success; that there is no place where decisions are so just; and that, not to speak of all the learned men to be found there, a style of wit is created

amongst them, by sheer natural common sense and the intercourse of people of fashion, which, beyond question, judges more delicately of things than all the rusty learning of pedants.[29]

Ur. It is true that, however little you remain there, you have plenty of things daily passing before your eyes to give you a habit of recognising them; and especially, as to what concerns good or bad raillery.

Dor. The Court, I grant you, has a few ridiculous people; and I am, as you may see, the first to banter them. But, upon my word, there is a great number, too, amongst professional wits; if we ridicule some Marquises, I fancy there is much more reason to ridicule authors. It would be amusing to put them on the stage, with their learned antics and ridiculous refinements; their vicious custom of killing folks in their plays, their greed of praise, their scantiness of thought, their traffic of reputation, their cliques, offensive and defensive, as well as their wars of wit, and combats in prose and verse.

Lys. Molière is very happy, sir, in having so warm a defender. But, to come to facts, the question is whether this piece is good; I engage to shew in it a hundred manifest faults.

Ur. It is strange in you gentlemen poets that you always condemn the pieces which every one runs after, and speak well only of those which no one goes to see. You display an unconquerable hatred for the one, and an inconceivable tenderness for the others.

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[29] Compare Dryden's *Defence of the Epilogue*, in which he states:—"Whence is it that our conversation is so much refined? I must freely, and without flattery, ascribe it to the court; and in it, particularly to the king, whose example gives a law to it." Sir Walter Scott, in a note on these words, remarks, "this passage, though complimentary to Charles, contains much sober truth."

Dor. That is because it is generous to side with the unfortunate.

Ur. But, pray, Mr Lysidas, point us out some of those faults, which I could not detect.

Lys. Those who are versed in Aristotle and Horace, Madam, see at once that this comedy sins against all the rules of Art.

Ur. I confess that I am not familiar with those gentlemen, and that I do not know the rules of Art.

Dor. You are a most amusing set with your rules of Art, with which you embarrass the ignorant, and deafen us perpetually. To hear you talk, one would suppose that those rules of Art were the greatest mysteries in the world; and yet they are but a few simple observations which good sense has made upon that which may impair the pleasure taken in that kind of poems; and the same good sense which in former days made these observations makes them every day easily, without resorting to Horace and Aristotle. I should like to know whether the great rule of all rules is not to please; and whether a play which attains this has not followed a good method? Can the whole public be mistaken in these matters, and cannot everyone judge what pleases him?

Ur. I have observed one thing in these gentlemen; and that is, that those who speak most of rules, and who know them better than others, write comedies which no one admires.

Dor. Which shews, Madam, how little notice we should take of their troublesome objections. For, in short, if pieces according to rule do not please, and those do please which are not according to rule, then the rules must, of necessity, have been badly made. So let us laugh at the sophistry with which they would trammel the public taste, and let us judge a comedy only by the effect which it produces upon

ourselves. Let us give ourselves up honestly to whatever stirs us deeply, and never hunt for arguments to mar our pleasure.

Ur. For my part, when I see a play, I look only whether the points strike me; and when I am well entertained, I do not ask whether I have been wrong, and whether the rules of Aristotle would forbid me to laugh.

Dor. It is just as if a man were to taste a capital sauce, and wished to know whether it were good according to the recipe in the cookery-book.

Ur. Very true; and I wonder at the critical refinements of certain people about things in which we should think for ourselves.

Dor. You are right, madam, in thinking all these mysterious critical refinements very odd. For really, if they are to subsist, we are reduced to discrediting ourselves. Our very senses must be slaves in everything; and, even in eating and drinking, we must no longer dare to find anything good, without permission from the committee of Taste.

Lys. So, sir, your only reason is that *The School for Wives* has pleased you; you care not whether it be according to rule, provided . . .

Dor. Gently, Mr Lysidas; I do not grant you that. I certainly say that the great art is to please; and that, as this comedy has pleased those for whom it was written, I think that is enough, and that we need not care about anything else. But, at the same time, I maintain that it does not sin against any of the rules to which you allude. I have read them, thank Heaven! as well as other men, and I could easily prove that perhaps we have not on the stage a more regular play than this.

El. Courage, Mr Lysidas; we are undone if you give way.

Lys. What, sir! when the protasis, the epitasis, the peripetia . . .

Dor. Nay, Mr Lysidas, you overwhelm us with your fine words. Pray, do not seem so learned. Humanize your discourse a little, and speak intelligibly. Do you fancy a Greek word gives more weight to your arguments? And do you not think that it would look as well to say, "the exposition of the subject," as the "protasis;" the "progress of the plot," as the "epitasis;" the "crowning incident," as the "peripetia?"

Lys. These are terms of art that we are allowed to make use of. But as these words offend your ears, I shall explain myself in another way; and I ask you to give me a plain answer to three or four things which I have to say. Can a piece be endured which sins against the very description of a play? For, after all, the name of a dramatic poem comes from a Greek word which signifies to act, in order to shew that the nature of the poem consists in action. But, in this comedy, there are no actions; it is made up of narratives by Agnès, or by Horace.

Mar. Ha! ha! Chevalier.

Cl. Ingeniously said. Now we come to the point.

Lys. Can anything be less witty, or, rather, more low, than some of the words at which every one laughs; above all, *children through the ear?*

Cl. Capital!

El. Oh!

Lys. Is not the scene of the servant-man and maid, indoors, of tedious length, and absolutely contemptible?[30]

Mar. True.

Cl. Assuredly.

El. He is right.

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[30] See *The School for Wives*, Act i., Scene 2, page 157.

Lys. Does not Arnolphe give his money too readily to Horace? And, as he is the ridiculous character of the piece, ought he to be made to do the action of a gentleman?

Mar. Good! The observation is good again.

Cl. Admirable!

El. Marvellous!

Lys. Are not the sermon and maxims ridiculous, offending against the respect due to religion?[31]

Mar. Well said!

Cl. Spoken as it ought to be!

El. Nothing could be better!

Lys. And this Monsieur de la Souche, to be brief, who is supposed to be a sensible man, and who appears so grave in many passages, does he not descend to something too comical and too exaggerated in the fifth act, when he declares the vehemence of his love for Agnès, with that wild rolling of his eyes, those ridiculous sighs, those silly tears, which set every one laughing?

Mar. Wonderful, egad!

Cl. Miraculous!

El. Long live Mr Lysidas!

Lys. I pass over a hundred thousand other things, for fear of being tedious.

Mar. Upon my word, Chevalier, you are in for it!

Dor. We shall see.

Mar. You have met your man.

Dor. Perhaps so.

Mar. Answer, answer, answer, answe

Dor. Willingly. It is . . .

Mar. Answer, I beg you.

Dor. Allow me then. If . . .

Mar. 'Gad, I defy you to answer.

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[31] See *The School for Wives*, Act iii., Scene 2, page 175.

Dor. Yes. If you talk perpetually.

Cl. Pray let us hear his reasons.

Dor. First, it is not true to say that the whole piece consists only of narratives. There is a good deal of action in it, passing on the stage; the narratives are themselves actions, according to the constitution of the piece, inasmuch as these narratives are all naturally told to the person concerned, who, by these means, is every moment thrown into a confusion which delights the audience, and who, at each fresh tiding, takes all the measures he can to ward off the misfortune which he dreads.

Ur. For my part, I think the beauty of the subject of *The School for Wives* consists in this continual confidence; and what seems to me diverting enough is, that a sensible man who is warned of everything by an innocent creature whom he loves, and by a marplot, who is his rival, cannot, for all that, escape his fate.

Mar. Nonsense! nonsense!

Cl. A weak answer.

El. Pitiful reasons.

Dor. As to the *children through the ear*, it has no jest in it except as regards Arnolphe; the author did not insert it as a jest, but only as a characteristic of the man, and the better to depict his craze; since he repeats a vulgar, stupid saying of Agnès as the finest thing in the world, and one which has given him inconceivable pleasure.

Mar. Wretchedly answered.

Cl. That will not satisfy us.

El. It is saying nothing.

Dor. As to the money which he gives so liberally, besides that the letter of his best friend is a sufficient surety for him, it is by no means incompatible for a man to be ridiculous in some things and worthy in others. And as

to the scene between Alain and Georgette, in the house, which some think long and insipid, it is certainly not without its reasons; and just as Arnolphe is victimised during his journey by the pure innocence of his mistress, so, on his return, he is kept a long time at his own door by the innocence of his servants, just that he may be punished throughout by the very things whereby he thought to make his precautions good.

Mar. These reasons are good-for-nothing.

Cl. All this is not worth a jot.

El. It is pitiful.

Dor. As to the moral discourse, which you call a sermon, it is a fact that truly religious people who heard it saw nothing that shocked what you mentioned; and doubtless those words, "hell," and "boiling cauldrons" are sufficiently justified by the extravagance of Arnolphe, and by the innocence of her to whom he speaks. As for the amorous transports of the fifth act, which you blame as too exaggerated and burlesqued, I should like to know whether this is not a satire on lovers, and whether sober people, and even the most staid, on such occasions, do not do things . . .

Mar. Upon my word, Chevalier, you had better hold your tongue.

Dor. Very well. In short, if we were to look at ourselves when we are much in love . . .

Mar. I will not so much as listen to you.

Dor. Hear me, pray. In the violence of our passion . . .

Mar. Tol, lol, lol, lol, de rol, tol, lol, lol, lol, de rol. [*Humming.*]

Dor. What?

Mar. Tol, lol, lol, lol, lol, de rol, tol, lol, lol, de rol.

Dor. I am not aware . . .

Mar. Tol, lol, lol, lol, de rol, tol, lol, lol, lol, de rol.

Ur. I think that . . .

Mar. Tol, lol, lol, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la.

Ur. There are many funny things in our discussion. I fancy a little comedy might be made out of them, and that it would not be a bad wind-up to *The School for Wives.*

Dor. You are right.

Mar. Egad, Chevalier, you would play a part in it not at all to your advantage.

Dor. True, Marquis.

Cl. For my part, I wish it could be done, if they could give the whole thing just as it has happened.

El. And I would gladly furnish them with my part.

Lys. I think I should not refuse them mine.

Ur. As every one is satisfied, Chevalier, write out our discussion, and give it to Molière, whom you know, to work into a play.

Cl. He would not care for it, I am sure; it would be no panegyric upon him.

Ur. No, no, I know his mood; he does not mind if people criticise his pieces, so that they come to see them.

Dor. Ay. But what ending can we find to this plot? For there can be neither marriage nor recognition, and I do not see how we can finish the discussion.

Ur. We must think of some incident for that.

SCENE LAST.

CLIMÈNE, URANIA, ELIZA, DORANTE, MARQUIS, LYSIDAS, GALOPIN.

Gal. Madam, supper is ready.

Dor. Ah! This is just what we wanted for an ending and we can find nothing more natural. They shall dis-

pute hard and fast on both sides, as we have done, without any one giving way; a boy shall come and say "supper is ready;" every one shall rise and go to supper.

Ur. The comedy cannot end better; we shall do well to stop here.

APPENDIX.

A, page 245.

The second scene of *The School for Wives criticised* (Act i., Scene 2) is thus rendered in Thomas Brown's *Stage Beaux* (Act i., Scene 2):—

URANIA, ELIZA, CLEMENE, PAGE.

Page. Madam, my Lady Clemene is come to wait on your Ladyship.

Urania. Heaven forbid! Ah, my dear Eliza, who can bear this killing visit?

Eliza. A just Judgment on you, Cousin, for your Complaint of Solitude.

Ur. Run, run down immediately, and tell her I'm not at home.

Page. I've told her already that you are, Madam.

Ur. You heedless little Animal you, what have you done?

Page. Who, I, Madam?

Ur. I'll have you better taught than to give Answers in your own Head!

Page. I'll run down and stop her—I'll tell her that your Ladiship is not pleas'd to be at home—[*Going.*]

Ur. Stay, you thoughtless thing, you—you've done mischief enough already.

Page. Why, Madam, 't will be time enough; for when I came up she was engag'd in a Dispute with a Lord, whose Coach was passing your Ladiship's Door when her's stopped.

Ur. Go, get you down, and wait on her up—Oh! my Eliza! How shall we support the Fatigue of this Visit?

Eliz. . . . She is from Head to Foot the most affected Creature alive; she looks as if her whole Body were out of Joint; her Shoulders, Hips, and Head, moving like Clock-work on Springs. She affects a continual Languishment of Vice when she speaks, and is perpetually simpering and rouling her Eyes to Court the Reputation of a little Mouth and full Eyes . . .

Ur. Hold your Tongue—See, she's here.

B, Page 247.

The third scene from *The School for Wives criticised* is imitated in *The Stage Beaux* (Act i., Scene 2) as follows :—

Enter CLEMENE ; URANIA, ELIZA, PAGE.

Ur. Oh, Madam, how long 'tis since——

Cl. Eh ! mee Dear excuse me !—Let me dee if I'm not just dead ! Oh ! a Chair immediately !

Ur. Page, a Chair quickly.

Cl. Eh Ged ! Eh Ged !

Ur. Ah, Madam ! What's the matter ?

Cl. Eh ! E'en quite spent !

Ur. What will you have ?

Cl. Eh ! Eh ! My Heart is beating its last.

Ur. The Vapours ?

Cl. No, no——

Ur. Will you be unlac'd ?

Cl. Eh Ged ! No——Eh !

Ur. What's your distemper ?

El. How long have you been ill ?

Cl. Eh ! I have been above these three Hours at that filthy Place. Eh !

El. What filthy Place, Madam, cou'd your Ladyship go to ?

Cl. I protest ee'm asham'd to name it—Eh !

Ur. How, Madam !

Cl. Nay, but my Lord Vaunt-Title, and Sir Jerry Witwoud carry'd me by main force—Let me dey ! It was a perfect Rape on my Understanding.

El. Pray, Madam, explain yourself.

Cl. Eh ! That School of Debauchery, the Play-house, Medem ! Let me dey, if I have been there since the Charming Mr Collier's Book came out, before. And now for my Sins, Madam, for my Sins was I hurry'd to that Sink of Profaneness and Smut——But it has given me the Palpitation of the Heart so violently, that let me dey, I shan't recover it this Fortnight.

El. Ah, Cousin ! The Misery of Humane Life ! How strangely Diseases fall on us which we never dream of !

Cl. And then —— which is the biggest Misfortune of all, Madam, let me dey, if I did not just at your Ladiship's Door meet my Lord Truewit's Coach, who on my Complaint had the odious Fally Militate for the hideous beastly Play-house.

Ur. I own, Madam, I don't know what Sort of strong Constitution my Cousin and I are made of, for we were twice this Week, and yet came home safe and sound, easie, pleas'd and gay.

Cl. Eh ! Madam, and are you one of the Abandon'd ? Do you see Plays too ?

Ur. Yes, and mind 'em too.

Cl. And do they not put you almost into Convulsions?

Ur. I thank my Stars I'm not so nice; and for what I can find by Plays, they're more likely to Cure than make us Sick.

Cl. Eh! Madam! What is't you say? Can any Person, that is a Person of the least Reverence in Understanding, advance such an extravagant Absurdity? Can a Lady of any feen Parts run so directly on the Point and Edge of Reason, without any apprehension of a ——. And is there in reality any Person of Sense, who is so very hungry and greedy after Laughter, as to be able to relish the nauseous Impertinencies of Plays? Eh! for mee part, I avow mee insensible of the least grain of Wit in eny of 'em. They all provoke mee in the most furious Degree of disgust, and ev'n Sickness at everything in them.

El. Ah! With what a charming Eloquence my Lady speaks! I swear I thought a Play a good, innocent, useful Entertainment! But she has so persuasive an Art, and gives what she says so agreeable a Turn, that we can't resist our Inclinations to side with her Opinion.

Ur. I'm not so full of Complaisance to sacrifice my Opinion to another's Humour, without Conviction; And till I have better Reasons than any of the Party have yet urg'd, I shall think well of the Stage.

Cl. Eh! let me dey, Medem! if I have not the least Pity for you —Eh, take my Opinion mee Dear, and recall the Deviations of your Judgment, let not the World, the censorious World, know that ever the filthy odious Plays cou'd please you.

El. Ah, Cousin! how Gay and Engaging is the very Manner and Air of my Lady's Discourse? The very Dress ravishes, but the Sense Transports. How I pity the poor Players, who have so powerful an enemy.

Cl. Eh! the Hideous Obscenity and Ordures of the Plays.

Ur. Sure, Madam, your Ladiship's Smell has a peculiar turn that Way! For I protest I can discover no such Matter!

Cl. No, no, mee Dear, you shall never perswade me to that—— but you are one of the Obstinate Ones who tho' Convinc'd, think it a Scandal to own your Errour——for let me dey, Medem, if the filthy Poets do not leave the Odious Things so Open and Barefac'd, that there's not so much as a Lawn Veil drawn over them to justifie the Beholders, but the beastly Nudities are so very Monstrous and Visible, that the most prostituted Eyes in the Universe can't look that Way without Blushes and Confusion.

El. Ah!——how many Charms are in my Lady?

Cl. He! he! he! he! he!

Ur. Pray, Madam, be Particular——point out some of these Ordures, as you call 'em.

Cl. Eh! Madam, is there then a Necessity of being Particular?

Ur. Yes, where the Case is Doubtful.

Cl. Eh!

Ur. Come, pray be Particular.

Cl. Eh! fie!

Ur. I beg you.

Cl. Eh! Madam, you call all the Blood in my Body to my Face! I'm in the last Confusion, I've not one Word to say to you!

Ur. I'm Ignorant of the Cause, being not able to discover these Ordures myself.

Cl. So much the worse for you.

Ur. So much the better rather in my Opinion. I only take things to be what they are offer'd for, nor give myself the immodest Fatigue to Rack and Torture an Expression to confess a guilty Sense which the Poet neither expos'd to my View, or Meant.

Cl. A Woman's Modesty!

Ur. A Woman's Modesty lyes not in Grimaces and Affectation of knowing more in those Particulars than other People; this Affectation is the worst Symptom in the World of a sick Mind; and there can be no Modesty in the World so Ridiculous as that which takes ev'rything in the worst Sense. It discovers what Hypocrisie wou'd conceal, for it must argue a very good Acquaintance with the Lady to know her in a Mask and Disguise, and that at first Sight.

Cl. In short, Madam, you may be what you please——but all Plays are full of insupportable Ordures.

El. That's a most charming Word; Madam, I don't know what it means, yet certainly 'tis the most ravishing Word in the World.

Cl. In fine, Madam, you see your own Cousin takes my part.

Ur. Ah! Madam, if you dare believe me, you shou'd not build much on that, since she's a Dissembler, and won't speak her Mind.

El. Oh! fie Cousin—be not so Mischievous to bring me into Suspicion with my Lady! Shou'd she give Credit to your Calumny, how Unfortunate shou'd I be! I hope, Madam, I lye under no such injurious Thoughts from your Ladiship.

Cl. No, no, mee Dear, I mind her not, and believe you more Sincere.

El. Madam, you're infinitely in the Right, and you do me but Justice when you believe, I think you one of the most accomplish'd and engaging Persons Alive; that I'm entirely vanquisht by your Reasons, am absolutely of your Sentiments, and extravagantly charm'd with every expression you utter.

Cl. Elese! Madam, I speak without Affectation.

El. That's Apparent, Medem! as that all you say and do is Natural and Easie, your Words, the Tone of your Voice, your Mien, your Actions, your Address, has I know not what of Quality in them, which charms ev'ry Beholder; I'm studying every Motion of your Eyes and Mouth; and I'm so full of you, Medem, that the Town in a little Time will take me for a very Counterfeit of your Ladiship.

Cl. Eh! Medem! you mock me!

El. How can you think me so Stupid?

Cl. Let me dey, Medem, I'm but a Scurvy Model.

El. The best in the World, Medem.

Cl. Eh! You flatter me, mee Dear!

El. Not in the least, Medem!

Cl. Spare my Blushes, I conjure you, Medem.

El. Eh! Medem, I've spar'd you extreamly, for I've not said a quarter of what I think.

Cl. Eh! Medem! Ged Medem no more——Y'ave put me into a most inexpressiable Confusion——in short, Medem Urinia, we are two to one, and Obstinacy and Opiniatietures, you know, are so unworthy a Woman of Wit.

C, Page 248.

Wycherley, in *The Plain Dealer* (Act ii., Scene 1), defends his *Country Wife*, and has imitated the third scene from Molière's *The School for Wives criticised* as follows:—Climène is called Olivia, and Elise, Eliza, in the English play.

Ol. You think a woman modest that sees the hideous *Country Wife* without blushing, or publishing her detestation of it? D'ye hear him, cousin?

El. Yes, and am, I must confess, something of his opinion; and think, that as an over-conscious fool at a play, by endeavouring to show the author's want of wit, exposes his own to more censure, so may a lady call her own modesty in question, by publicly cavilling with the poet's. For all those grimaces of honour and artificial modesty disparage a woman's real virtue, as much as the use of white and red does the natural complexion: and you must use very, very little, if you would have it thought your own.

Ol. Then you would have a woman of honour with passive looks, ears, and tongue, undergo all the hideous obscenity she hears at nasty plays.

El. Truly, I think a woman betrays her want of modesty, by showing it publicly in a play house, as much as a man does his want of courage by a quarrel there: for the truly modest and stout say least, and are least exceptious, especially in public.

Ol. O hideous, cousin! this cannot be your opinion. But you are one of those who have the confidence to pardon the filthy play.

El. Why, what is there of ill in't, say you?

Ol. O fy! fy! fy! would you put me to the blush anew? call all the blood into my face again? But to satisfy you then; first, the clandestine obscenity in the very name of *Horner*.

El. Truly, 'tis so hidden, I cannot find it out, I confess.

Ol. O horrid! Does it not give you the rank conception or image of

a goat, or town-bull, or a satyr? nay, what is yet a filthier image than all the rest, that of a eunuch?

El. What then? I can think of a goat, a bull, or a satyr, without any hurt?

Ol. Ay; but, cousin, one cannot stop there.

El. I can, cousin.

Ol. O no; for when you have these filthy creatures in your head once, the next thing you think, is what they do; as their defiling of honest men's beds and couches; rapes upon sleeping and waking country virgins under hedges, and on haycocks. Nay, further ——

El. Nay, no further, cousin. We have enough of your comment on the play, which will make me more ashamed than the play itself.

Ol. O, believe me, 'tis a filthy play! and you may take my word for a filthy play as soon as another's. But the filthiest thing in that play, or any other play, is ——

El. Pray keep it to yourself, if it be so.

Ol. No, faith, you shall know it; I'm resolved to make you out of love with the play. I say, the lewdest, filthiest thing is his *china*; nay, I will never forgive the beastly author his *china*. He has quite taken away the reputation of poor china itself, and sullied the most innocent and pretty furniture of a lady's chamber; insomuch that I was fain to break all my defiled vessels. You see I have none left; nor you I hope.

El. You'll pardon me, I cannot think the worse of my china for that of the playhouse.

Ol. Why, you will not keep any now, sure! 'Tis now as unfit an ornament for a lady's chamber as the pictures that come from Italy and other hot countries; as appears by their nudities, which I always cover, or scratch out, wheresoe'er I find 'em. But china! out upon't, filthy china! nasty, debauched china!

El. All this will not put me out of conceit with china, nor the play, which is acted to-day, or another of the same beastly author's, as you call him, which I'll go see.

Ol. You will not, sure! nay, you sha' not venture your reputation by going, and mine with leaving me alone with two men here: nay, you'll disoblige me for ever, if —— [*Pulls her back*].

El. I stay! —— your servant. [*Exit*].

D, Page 253.

The fifth Scene from Molière's *The School for Wives criticised*, is rendered as follows in Tom Brown's *The Stage Beaux* (Act i., Scene 4).

Enter LORD VAUNT-TITLE *at the Chamber door struggling with the* PAGE, *who wou'd stop hi*—

Page. Pray, Sir, go no farther!

Lord. Sure you don't know me!

Page. Yes, my Lord, I do—but you are not to come in.

Lord. What brutal insolence is this?

Page. My Lord, don't call your Civility in question by forcing into a Lady's Apartment, whether she will or not.

Lord. I come to wait on your Lady.

Page. But my Lady, Sir, will not be waited on—I told your Lordship that she was not within.

Lord. Why, I see her in the Room there.

Page. That's true, my Lord—but yet I tell you she is not within.

Ur. What's the matter there?

Lord. Only your Ladiship's Page is for playing the Fool a little, Madam.

Page. I told my Lord that your Ladiship was not at Home, and yet he wou'd needs press into the Room.

Ur. And why did you tell my Lord so?

Page. Because your Ladiship was angry last time for letting him know that you were within.

Ur. Was ever such Impudence in so Young a Creature! I hope your Lordship has a better Opinion of me than to believe what he says; he takes your Lordship for an impertinent Dancing-master I caution'd him about.

Lord. Oh! Medem, I'm infinitely satisfy'd of the Truth of what you say, and in Respect of your Ladiship I shall forbear to teach him to distinguish better betwixt a Man of Quality and a Dancing-Master.

El. There's an obliging Difference, Cousin!

Ur. A Chair there, Impertinent.

Page. There is one, Madam. [*The page thrusts it rudely to him.*

E, Page 254.

Thomas Brown has in his *Stage-Beaux* (Act i., Scene 6), imitated the fourth scene of *The School for Wives criticised* as follows:—

Lord. Your Page, Medem, has a strange Aversion to my Person.

El. He's much in the Wrong, my Lord.

Lord. I fancy my ill Mien is not engaging enough with him, Ha! ha! ha! hey! hey! hey!——But pray Ladies what were you upon?

Ur. The Play-house, my Lord.

Lord. I just came from it.

El. With this Lady.

Lord. Right, Madam, she did me the Honour to Sacrifice Three Hours to the Adornment of the Boxes: For Rat me if there has not been a Dearth of Beauty there ever since her Ladiship has forsaken the House, except when your Ladiship was there.

Cl. Well, my Lord, your Opinion of the Play-house.

Lord. Rat me, a most Impertinent Place.

Cl. Eh! How I am Ravish'd with your Judgment, mee Lord!

Lord. Oh! 'Tis a most Abominable Insipid Place, Rat me, in the Universe! Why, Medem, the Devil take me if I was not horribly squeez'd to get a Place there! I thought I should have been Smother'd or Press'd to Death to get in. See how Hideously my Cloaths and Peruque are rumpled. By your Favour, Lady; I must adjust me.

[*Goes to the glass.*

El. Nay, that indeed ought to cry Vengeance on the Place, and justifies your Lordship's Censure.

F, Page 254.

What Molière says in *The School for Wives criticised* (Act i., Scenes 6 and 7), in defence of his Comedy, Tom Brown applies in *The Stage-Beaux* to the stage in general, and let Dorimant (Act i., Scene 6) defend it with the same arguments his French prototype uses in defence of *The School for Wives.*

LORD VAUNT-TITLE, DORIMANT, SIR JERRY WITWOOD, CELEMENE, URANIA, ELIZA.

Ur. Oh! Dorimant, you are come to my Assistance in a lucky Minute, and bring Right, a better Advocate than a Woman.

Dor. Not than such a Woman as your Ladiship, Madam: But I pray Ladies and Gentlemen keep your Places, nor let me interrupt your Discourse, for you are on a Subject that has long divided the Town.

Ur. Here's my Lord a violent Enemy of the Stage.

Lord. True, Medem, I am so——for it's Contempt of Quality. In short, it is a most detestable Place; refuse me, detestable to the last Degree; more detestable than anything that can be call'd detestable.

Dor. My Judgment and Reason then are most detestable.

Lord. Why, rat me, Dorimant, dost thou pretend to defend it?

Dor. Yes, my Lord, I am that bold Man——But pray, my Lord, what are the Reasons of your Indignation?

Lord. Reasons, why the Stage is detestable?

Dor. Yes, my Lord.

Lord. It is detestable, because it is detestable.

Dor. After this indeed, who wou'd say one word more——The sentence is past, and the Pulpit without any more ado condemn'd.

Lord. Sir Jerry here's of my opinion.

Dor. The Authority is admirable, I confess.

Sir J. And are you a Defender of the Stage?

Dor. Certainly, Sir Jerry.

Lord. Demme! I'll take care to inform the poor Rogues of their Advocate. Hey! hey! He, he, he!

Cl. Eh! Let me dey, Mr Dorimant, this is furiously incongruous

to your Reputation!——for Mr Collier has prov'd the Poets a Company of strange debauch'd Fellows—who are furiously my Aversion.

Dor. Mr Collier does by the Poets, what he says Aristophanes did by Socrates, he puts them on an odious Dress, and then Rails at 'em for their Habit. But what say you if I am persuaded to be for the Stage, even by your beloved Mr Collier?

Cl.
Lord. } He! he! he! That's pleasant indeed!
Sir J.

Cl. Eh! Mr Dorimant, you are for Paradoxes to show your Wit!

Dor. I am for Truth, Madam——and what I say I give my Reason for—— He tells us in the very Front of his Book, That the Business of the Stage is to Recommend Vertue, and Discountenance Vice, to show the uncertainty of Humane Greatness . . . After this, who wou'd not be for the Stage, that dares pretend to be a Lover of either Vertue or Sense?

L'IMPROMPTU DE VERSAILLES.

COMÉDIE.

THE IMPROMPTU OF VERSAILLES.

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT.

(THE ORIGINAL IN PROSE).

OCT. 14TH, 1663.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

In the delightful *Impromptu de Versailles*, which was performed for the first time at Versailles, during some part of the month of October 1663,[1] Molière hits round freely and pleasantly at all the world, himself included; but the principal object which he had in its conception was to retaliate upon his critics, and, in particular, upon his rivals of the hôtel de Bourgogne. *The School for Wives criticised* had, by its keen satire, exasperated that part of Parisian society which had been loudest in its cavils at Molière's genius and success; and they who had felt the directness of his blows thirsted for revenge. The rival company, eager to pay their satirist in his own coin, and anticipating a run upon a play which should hold the poet up to ridicule, commissioned a young and unknown writer, Edme Boursault,[2] to supply them with a new comedy, and the result was *The Painter's Portrait*, in which *The School for Wives* is one of the staple subjects of ridicule. This piece, which was not represented until the last week in October, was well attended, and still more applauded; but its merits were not such as to bring lasting fame to its author. There can, however, be no doubt that Molière was hit by it rather harder than would appear from the dignified manner in which he rejoins—or rather declines to rejoin—to it in the *Impromptu*. It has been said that Molière and his company were sent for by the King to Versailles, and that Louis commanded his favourite comic dramatist to reply to the attack of his critics,[3] for which purpose he

[1] According to Taschereau's *Histoire de la vie et des ouvrages de Molière*, Vol. I., page 82, and which precedes the works of our author, edited by the same gentleman, in 1858, in six volumes, Molière and his troupe did not go to Versailles before the 16th of October, and remained there until the 23d; hence *The Impromptu* could not have been performed on the 14th of that month, as is generally stated. In looking, however, at the second volume of Moliere's works, edited by the same Mons. Taschereau, I find, page 353, on the title-page of the *Impromptu de Versailles*, "*Représentée . . . le* 14 *Octobre* 1663." The edition, published by M. Lemerre, and which is a faithful reprint of the original editions of 1666 and 1682, gives the same date; so does Jal in his *Dictionnaire*, and he even mentions that the King gave two thousand livres to Moliere and his troop for this representation. M. Moland mentions the 24th of October 1663.

[2] Edme Boursault (1638-1701) was a dramatic author of moderate talents, but whose kind and frank character gained him many friends. *Le Mercure Galant*, *Esope à la ville*, and *Esope à la cour*, are considered his best plays.

[3] See page 300, note 6.

placed the Court theatre at his disposal. Molière found the task a difficult one, having only a few days in which to execute the commission; but he cannot be held to have done anything unworthy of his fame in the bright and sparkling *Impromptu.* It satisfied the King; and, as a reply to Boursault's play, was acted on the 4th of November at the Theatre of the Palais-Royal, and subsequently for three weeks, with considerable effect in bringing Molière's rivals back to their senses. I strongly suspect that between the performance at Court and that before the public, Molière enhanced and deepened some of his remarks against Boursault, and that the latter, Montfleury and De Villiers, did the same with the plays they wrote, attacking Molière. In any case, our author did not think *The Impromptu of Versailles* of sufficiently enduring interest to merit printing, and it was not until after his death that his friend La Grange gave it to the world.

It must have astonished the Court to see, on the rising of the curtain, Molière and his troupe, not disguised, but in their everyday apparel, with their ordinary countenances, all quarrelling among themselves, grumbling at the manager and author, preparing for a rehearsal, and behaving as if there was no public before them, and, above all, such a courtly public as was to be found in the Salle des Comédies at Versailles. But the fiction that the King was not present, and should not come for a couple of hours, saved appearances.

It is to be regretted that Molière in *The Impromptu* gave way to personalities,—a habit in which dramatic authors were formerly inclined to indulge too freely in every country, and which the improved good taste of the public has now generally banished from the stage.

The Impromptu was attempted to be answered by Montfleury, junior, in *l' Impromptu de l'hôtel de Condé*, and by De Villiers in *la Vengeance des Marquis;* both these plays were acted at the hôtel de Bourgogne, but are now deservedly forgotten. The actors of the hôtel du Marais (see Vol. I., Prefatory Memoir, page xxiv.) tried to remain neutral, and played a comedy by Chevalier, called *les Amours de Calotin*, in which both parties, the troupe of Molière and that of the hôtel de Bourgogne, are faintly criticised. Two dissertations about *The School for Wives*, in the form of dialogues, were also printed, but not acted; the one was called *Le Panégyrique de l'Ecole des femmes, ou Conversation comique sur les Oeuvres de M. de Molière*, by Robinet; the other, which probably concludes in favour of Molière, bore the title of *La Guerre comique, ou la Défense de l'Ecole des femmes*, and was written by de la Croix. In "*Le Panégyrique de l'Ecole des Femmes*, published in Paris by *Jean Guignard, le fils, en la grande salle du Palais, à l'image de St Jean*, 1664, the author makes an Englishman (Lysandre) give his opinion upon *The School for Wives.* Upon being asked whether he had seen the piece, he answers that if business had not taken him to Paris, he would have come expressly in order to see it, as it had made a great noise already in England. Says he in reply to a question as regards the feeling upon it

in his own country. "Two reasons prevent it being to the taste of every one, the first that it is a languishing comedy, and that as you are aware, the English only like pure tragedy; the second, that the master of this school is morose and peevish, and wishes to make husbands the reverse of what they are in England, at which our ladies are not altogether pleased." A friend of his, a Frenchman, replies to this:—"You are right, the husbands there are altogether good, I know it by experience. I have seen some here, who have really surprised me by their goodness. Far from being jealous of their wives, they like those who pay them attentions, and you can do them no greater favour than flatter their better halves."

As in *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Molière's actors appear, not in their dramatic, but in their own, characters, it behoves us to say something of them here. In the Prefatory Memoir (see Vol. I. p. xix.) we have stated the names of those actors who were members of the Illustre Théâtre, as well as those who left with Molière for the provinces, and those who returned to Paris with him. We shall now briefly give a few details about the actors of the troupe of Molière in 1663. Only two of them, Messrs Duparc and Debrie, are not mentioned in the list of Dramatis Personæ of *The Impromptu;* later on, Hubert, Baron, Beauval and his wife, and Marie de l'Estang became members of his company.

Brécourt, whose real name was Guillaume Marcoureau, was a member of Molière's troupe only from June 1662 until Easter 1664; before that time he had been an actor at the Théâtre du Marais, and, after a quarrel with Molière, left him for the hôtel de Bourgogne. His life was full of accidents. Having killed a coachman, he was obliged to fly to Holland; took service there under the Prince of Orange; but having failed in his attempt to carry off one of his countrymen whom the French ministry wished to get hold of, and whom Brécourt had promised to deliver into their hands, he came back to Paris, received his pardon, and returned to the stage. He once, in presence of Louis XIV., and after a severe struggle, killed a wild boar with his sword. As a dramatic author, he possesses some, though not great, merit. One of his pieces, *The Ghost of Molière*, written after Molière's death, and in his praise, is dedicated to the Duke d'Enghien, formerly a great enemy of Molière; it was played at the hôtel de Bourgogne; and was, for a long time, printed at the end of Molière's works. Brécourt died March 28th, 1685, from his having broken a blood-vessel, whilst playing before the Court in his own comedy *Timon*.

Charles Varlet, known as de la Grange was one of the best actors of Molière's troupe, and the very words our author uses in addressing him (see page 306) prove this. He was the official orator of the company, delivered all the customary speeches, and announced the new plays at the closing or opening of the theatre. Together with Vinot, he published in 1682 the first collected edition of Molière's works, in which appeared for the first time, *Don Garcia of Navarre*, *The Impromptu of Versailles*, *Don*

Juan, Mélicerte, The Magnificent Lovers, The Countess of Escarbagnas, and *The Hypochondriac.* He died on the first of March 1692, and left behind him a manuscript book, in quarto, which is even now (1875) carefully kept in an iron chest by the *Comédie française,* and has for its title: *Extrait des receptes et des affaires de la Comédie depuis pasques de l'année* 1659, *apartenant au sr. de la Grange, l'un des comédiens du Roy.*"

Du Croisy, whose real name was Philbert Gassot, was a very able actor, who played the part of Tartuffe. After Molière's death, he withdrew from the stage, and went to live at Conflans-Sainte-Honorine, in the neighbourhood of Paris, where he died in 1695.

La Thorillière, whose real name was Lenoir, had been a captain in an infantry regiment, and *maréchal de camp.* Smitten by a theatrical mania, he asked and obtained permission from Louis XIV. to resign, and to adopt the stage as a profession. He was of lofty stature, and is said to have played kings and peasants very well, for, in Molière's time, these two parts were played by the same actor. A tragedy of his, *Marc-Antoine et Cléopâtre,* which was never printed, had some success in its time. He died in 1680.

Louis Béjart, surnamed L'Éguisé, the sharp one, one of the early actors in Molière's troupe, was a younger brother of Madeleine and Geneviève Béjart, and appears to have acted servants' parts. He became lame in trying to separate two of his friends who wished to fight a duel (see Vol. I., page 111, note 2). He was pensioned off in 1670, and died in 1678.

Madame Duparc was the wife of Berthelot, otherwise called Duparc, with the cognomen of Gros-René, because he was very stout. Both husband and wife had joined Molière's troop at Lyons in 1653, and remained with him, except for one year, when they were with the troupe of the Marais. Madame Duparc played the princesses in tragedies, and was so very handsome, that she attracted, and scandal says, responded to, the attentions of some of the most celebrated poets of the day. In 1667, three years after the death of her husband, she went to the hôtel de Bourgogne, and there acted Andromaque in Racine's tragedy of that name. Report states that she was rather stiff and ceremonious: hence, in answer to Molière's remarks in the *Impromptu* (see page 305), she replies "that no one in the world" is less so than she. She died in 1668, only twenty-five years old.

Madame Madeleine Béjart's life has been already described in the Prefatory Memoir (see Vol. I., page xxi.); to which we refer the reader.

Madame Debrie, the wife of Edme Villequin Debrie, played inferior parts in Molière's troupe. The stage gossip of the times, at no period a very sound authority, pretends that she had been beloved by Molière. She was a very good and handsome actress, and acted, amongst others, the parts of Isabella in *The School for Husbands,* of Agnès in *The School for Wives,* and of Éliante in *The Misanthrope.* She retained her youthful appearance to an advanced age, and died in 1706.

Madame Molière was the wife of our celebrated author. In the Prefatory Memoir, Vol. I., page 290, I have already given some details of her marriage, and of the way in which she is said to have behaved to her husband. Her great charm appears to have been in her voice, which, according to all accounts, was both musical and pre-eminently feminine. The author of the *Entretiens galants* says: "Of this she is herself so well aware, that she has a different tone of voice for every different part she plays:" hence she was an excellent actress. It has been generally said that Molière describes his wife in *The Citizen who apes the Nobleman* (see Vol. VI., Act iii. Sc. 9) in the following words: "Her eyes are not large, but they are full of fire, the most brilliant, the most piercing, the most moving, imaginable. Her mouth is large; but it possesses attractions unseen in other mouths. She is not tall; but she is easy and elegant. She affects a careless air in her speech and carriage, but there is grace in all, and her manners have an inexpressible charm that appeals to every heart. Her wit is most refined and delicate; her conversation delightful; and if she be capricious beyond compare,—why, everything is becoming in a beauty, and we bear everything from a beauty."

If we are to believe the gossip of the time, as repeated but not substantiated by many of Molière's biographers, Madame Molière must have been a very depraved woman, who chose her lovers amongst the most elegant courtiers, such as the Duke de Lauzun, the Abbé de Richelieu, the Count de Guiche, and several others. These accusations are really backed by very little proof; but that Molière was jealous is only too well ascertained. According to a libellous booklet, published fifteen years after Molière's death, and called: *La Fameuse comédienne, ou Histoire de la Guérin, auparavant femme et veuve de Molière*,[4] which is a storehouse of the scandal from behind the wings, and has been a repository for all the attacks made against Molière or his wife,—our author was one day walking with his friend Chapelle in his garden at Auteuil, "who perceiving him to be more than usually out of sorts, pressed him several times to tell him the reason. Molière, who was somewhat ashamed to have so little fortitude under so common a misfortune, avoided replying as long as he could; but, as he was just then in one of those moods when the heart is full, so well known to persons in love, he yielded to the desire of unbosoming himself, and confessed frankly to his friend that the cause of his dejection was the manner in which he was compelled to treat his wife. Chapelle, who thought Molière above that sort of thing, rallied him, because a man who could so well depict the foibles of others gave way to the very one he was constantly attacking; adding, that the most absurd thing of all was to continue loving a woman who responds in no way to the tenderness lavished upon her! 'As for me,' he continued, 'I own that if I were so unfortunate as to find myself in such a case,

[4] This book was published in 1688 at Frankfort, by Frans Rottemberg.

and if I had a strong suspicion that the person in question granted her favours to others, I should feel so much scorn for her that it would infallibly cure me of my passion. Moreover, you have a satisfaction which you could not have were she a mistress: for vengeance, which generally succeeds to love in a heart that has been wronged, may indemnify you for all that your wife makes you suffer; since you have only to shut her up, and that will be a sure means of setting your mind at rest.' Molière, who had listened to his friend pretty quietly, here interrupted him to enquire whether he had ever been in love? 'Yes,' replied Chapelle, 'I have been so, as a sensible man should be; but I should never have fretted at a course which my honour required I should pursue; and I blush to find you so uneasy.' 'I see you have never yet been really in love," answered Molière; 'you have taken the semblance of love for love itself. I will not quote you a great many examples showing the potency of this passion; I will merely describe to you faithfully my own condition, that you may comprehend how little one is master of oneself, when once the passion has assumed that ascendancy of which temperament is usually the cause. In answer to your remark upon my perfect knowledge of the human heart, judging by those delineations of character which I daily put forth, I agree that I studied myself to the utmost, in order the more thoroughly to know its weakness; but if my knowledge has taught me that peril is to be shunned, my experience has but too truly proved to me that it is impossible to avoid it; I learn this every day in my own case. I am by nature gifted with a great propensity to tenderness . . . . I wished that the innocence of my choice should be a guarantee for my happiness. I took my wife, so to say, from her cradle. I brought her up with a care which was the cause of the rumours you have no doubt heard. I imagined that force of habit would inspire her with feelings which time could not destroy. I have omitted nothing which might tend to win them. As she was very young when I married her, I did not perceive her bad tendencies; and I believed myself a little less unfortunate than the generality of those who enter into similar engagements. Marriage, therefore, did not slacken my attentions; but I discovered in her so much indifference, that I began to perceive that all my precaution had been useless, and that what she felt towards me was far removed from what I could have desired to form my happiness. I reproached myself with feeling a delicacy which seemed to me ridiculous in a husband. I attributed to her mood what was in fact her want of affection for me. But I had only too many opportunities to convince me of my error; and the foolish passion she displayed shortly after for the Count de Guiche was too notorious for me to remain long in this apparent tranquillity. As soon as I heard of it, I spared no pains to conquer my own feelings, as I felt it impossible to change hers. I summoned all my strength of mind to this end. I called to my aid everything that might tend to console me. I considered her as one whose

sole merit was her innocence; and who, because she was unfaithful, retained none. I resolved from that time to live with her as a man of honour should who has a coquettish wife, and who believes, notwithstanding what is generally said, that his good name is not dependent upon his wife's ill behaviour. Yet I had the mortification to see that a woman without beauty, and one who owes the small amount of wit she possesses to the education which I had given her, could destroy, in a single moment, all my philosophy. Her presence makes me forget my resolutions; and the very first word she says to me in her own defence leaves me so convinced that my suspicions were unfounded, that I ask her pardon for having been so credulous. Yet my indulgence has not changed her. I have therefore determined to live with her as if she were not my wife; but if you knew what I suffer, you would pity me. My passion has reached such a height, that it actually takes her part against myself; and when I reflect how impossible it is to overcome what I feel for her, I, at the same time, tell myself that perhaps she has equal difficulty in suppressing her inclination for coquetry: thus finding myself more ready to pity than to blame her. No doubt, you will tell me that a man must be mad to love in such a manner; but, in my opinion, there is only one sort of love, and those who have never had such delicate feelings have never truly loved. Every earthly thing is associated with her in my heart; my mind is so full of her, that I can do nothing in her absence to divert my thoughts. When I behold her, a thrill of emotion and transport, which can be experienced but not expressed, deprives me of composure. I have no eyes left for her defects: I see only all that renders her so irresistible. Is not this the height of infatuation? And do you not wonder to find that what sense I have left serves but to make me perceive my weakness, without the power of conquering it?' 'I confess, indeed,' answered his friend, 'that you are more to be pitied than I could have believed; but we must hope all from time. Meanwhile, do not relax your efforts; they will produce their effect when you least expect it. For my part, I shall not cease my prayers that your wishes may speedily be crowned.' He thereupon withdrew; leaving Molière, who remained for some time lost in thought on the means of relieving his distress of mind."

Four years after Molière's death his widow married another comedian, François Guérin du Tricher or d'Estriché, who appears not to have possessed the intellectual qualities of her first husband, but to have had other charms which captivated the fair widow, if we can believe an epigram written at the time of her marriage, in which it is said that Mad. Molière had little love for her first husband, who was all mind, but much for her second, who was all body. She died the 30th of November 1700, about fifty-eight years old.

Madame Du Croisy, whose maiden name was Marie Claveau, was an actress of very little talent. Her daughter was Madame Poisson (see Prefatory Memoir, Vol. I., page xxv., note 18).

Madame Hervé, whose real name was Géneviève Béjart, was an elder sister of Madame Molière, and took the name of Madame Hervé, after her mother. She was twice married. Of her talents as an actress, very little is known. As to her acquaintance with Molière, we have given a suggestion of Soulié in the Prefatory Memoir, Vol. I., page xxviii. She died at the end of June 1675.

I have said above that the *Impromptu* was first represented before Louis XIV., hence its name of *Impromptu de Versailles*. It may be interesting to know how the actors and actresses were treated when at court. They each received an extra pay of six livres, all their expenses were paid, and even carriages were provided. If they had to go out of town the troupe had one thousand crowns per month, and each actor and actress two crowns per day for their expenses, as well as free lodgings. In summer, as well as in winter, each had three logs (*pièces*) of wood, one bottle of wine, one loaf, and, when at the Louvre, two wax-candles; when at Saint Germain, one large candle weighing two pounds; they also had every day, when they played at the King's, a lunch, which cost twenty-five crowns. This is what M. Chappuzeau states in his *Théâtre français*, but the picture appears a little over-drawn, though it may have been true during the beginning of the reign of Louis XIV. But later on, if we consult the *régistres de la Comédie française*, we find that no carriages nor extras were provided, and that often the indemnity which was allowed, did not cover the expenses.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MOLIÈRE, *a ridiculous Marquis.*
BRÉCOURT, *a man of Quality.*
LA GRANGE, *a ridiculous Marquis.*
DU CROISY, *a poet.*
LA THORILLIÈRE, *a fidgetty Marquis.*
BÉJART, *a busybody.*
FOUR BUSYBODIES.

Mademoiselle DUPARC,[5] *a ceremonious Marchioness.*
Mademoiselle BÉJART, *a prude.*
Mademoiselle DEBRIE, *a sage coquette.*
Mademoiselle MOLIÈRE, *a satirical wit.*
Mademoiselle DU CROISY, *a whining plague.*
Mademoiselle HERVÉ, *a conceited chamber maid.*

Scene—VERSAILLES, IN THE KING'S ANTECHAMBER.

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[5] For the use of "Mademoiselle," instead of "Madame," see Prefatory Memoir, Vol. I., pages xxiv. and xxx., notes 7 and 15.

THE IMPROMPTU OF VERSAILLES.

(*L'IMPROMPTU DE VERSAILLES.*)

SCENE I.

MOLIÈRE, BRÉCOURT, LA GRANGE, DU CROISY, MAD. DUPARC, MAD. BÉJART, MAD. DEBRIE, MAD. MOLIÈRE, MAD. DU CROISY, MAD. HERVÉ.

Mol. [*Alone, speaking to his fellow-actors behind the scenes*] Come, ladies and gentlemen, is this delay meant for a joke? Are you never coming here? Plague take the people! I say, Brécourt!

Bré. [*Behind*] What?

Mol. La Grange!

La Gr. [*Behind*] What is it?

Mol. Du Croisy!

Du C. [*Behind*] Who calls?

Mol. Mademoiselle Duparc!

Mad. Dup. [*Behind*] Well?

Mol. Mademoiselle Béjart!

Mad. Béj. [*Behind*] What is the matter?

Mol. Mademoiselle Debrie!

Mad. Deb. [*Behind*] What do you want?

Mol. Mademoiselle Du Croisy!

Mad. Du C. [*Behind*] Whatever is it?

Mol. Mademoiselle Hervé!

Mad. Her. [*Behind*] I am coming.

Mol. I think I shall go mad with these people. Listen to me! [*Enter Brécourt, La Grange, Du Croisy*] Deuce take me! gentlemen, will you drive me out of my wits to-day?

Bré. What would you have us do? We do not know our parts, and you will drive *us* out of our wits, if you force us to play in this style.

Mol. Oh, what an awkward team to drive are actors! [*Enter Mesdemoiselles Béjart, Duparc, Debrie, Molière, Du Croisy, and Hervé.*]

Mad. Béj. Well, here we are. What do you mean to do?

Mad. Dup. What is your idea?

Mad. Deb. What is to be done?

Mol. Pray, let us take our positions; and, since we are ready dressed, and the King will not come for a couple of hours, let us employ the time in rehearsing our piece, and see how we are to play our parts.

La Gr. How are we to play what we do not know?

Mad. Dup. As for me, I declare that I do not remember a word of my part.

Mad. Deb. I am sure I shall have to be prompted from beginning to end.

Mad. Béj. And I just mean to hold mine in my hand.

Mad. Mol. So do I.

Mad. Her. For my part, I have not much to say.

Mad. Du C. Nor I either; but, for all that, I would not promise not to make a slip.

Du C. I would give ten pistoles to be out of it.

Bré. I would stand a score of good blows with a whip to be the same, I assure you.

Mol. You are all just disgusted at having parts that do not please you. What would you do if you were in my place, I should like to know?

Mad. Béj. Who, you? You are not to be pitied; for, having written the piece, you need not be afraid of tripping.

Mol. And have I nothing to fear but want of memory? Do you reckon the anxiety as to our success, which is entirely my own concern, nothing? And do you think it a trifle to provide something comic for such an assembly as this; to undertake to excite laughter in those who command our respect, and who only laugh when they choose? Must not any author tremble when he comes to such a test? Would it not be natural for me to say that I would give everything in the world to be quit of it?

Mad. Béj. If that makes you tremble, you should have been more careful, and not have undertaken what you have done in eight days.

Mol. How could I refuse the command of a King?

Mad. Béj. How? By a respectful excuse, based on the impossibility of the thing in the short time that was allowed you. Anyone else in your place would have thought more of his reputation, and would have taken care not to expose himself, as you are doing. What will you do, pray, if the thing fails? Think what advantage all your enemies will take of it.

Mad. Deb. Ay, to be sure! You ought to have respectfully excused yourself to the King, or required more time.

Mol. Oh! Mademoiselle, Kings like nothing better than a ready obedience, and are not at all pleased to meet with obstacles. Things are not acceptable, save at the moment when they desire them; to try to delay their amusement is to take away all the charm. They want pleasures that do not keep them waiting; and those that are least prepared are always the most agreeable to them. We ought never to think of ourselves in what they desire of us; our only business is to please them; and, when they com-

mand us, it is our part to respond quickly to their wish. We had better do amiss what they require of us, than not do it soon enough; if we have the shame of not succeeding, we always have the credit of having speedily obeyed their commands. But now, pray, let us set about our rehearsal.

Mad. Béj. What would you have us do, if we do not know our parts?

Mol. I tell you, you shall know them; even if you do not quite know them, can you not fill in out of your own heads, as it is in prose, and you know your subject?

Mad. Béj. Thank you for nothing! Prose is worse than verse.

Mad. Mol. Shall I tell you what it is? You ought to write a comedy in which you could act all alone.

Mol. Be quiet, wife. What a dunce you are!

Mad. Mol. Thanks, dear husband. That just shows how strangely marriage alters people. You would not have said that to me eighteen months ago.

Mol. Pray be quiet.

Mad. Mol. It is an odd thing that a trifling ceremony deprives us of all our good qualities, and that a husband and a lover regard the same woman with such different eyes.

Mol. Here is a sermon!

Mad. Mol. Upon my word, if I were to write a comedy, that should be my subject; I would justify women in many things of which they are accused, and I would make husbands afraid of the contrast between their abrupt manners and the civility of lovers.

Mol. Well, let it pass. We cannot chatter now; we have something else to do.

Mad. Béj. But, since you were ordered to work on the subject of the criticism that is passed on you,[6] why

[6] See Introductory Notice, page 287.

not write that comedy of actors[7] that you have talked about so long? It was a ready-made notion, and would have come quite pat; the more so, as, having undertaken to delineate you, they gave you an opportunity to delineate them; it might have been called their portrait, far more justly than all their productions can be called yours. For, to try to mimic a comedian in a comic part is not to describe himself, but only after him the characters he represents, and making use of the same touches, and the same hues which he is obliged to employ in the various ridiculous characters that he draws from nature. But to mimic an actor in serious parts is to describe him by faults which are entirely his own, since characters of this kind do not carry either the gestures or ridiculous tones by which the actor is recognised.

Mol. It is true; but I have my reasons for not doing it; between ourselves, I did not think it would be worth the trouble; and, besides, I should want more time to work out the idea. As their days for acting are the same as our own,[8] I have hardly seen them three or four times since we have been in Paris; I have caught nothing of their style of delivery, but what was at once apparent to the eye; I should have to study them more, to make my portraits very like them.[9]

Mad. Dup. I must say I have recognised some of them in your imitations.

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[7] See *The School for Wives criticised*, page 266, where Dorante throws out this idea:—"It would be amusing to put them (the actors) on the stage, with their learned antics and ridiculous refinements," &c.

[8] By "their," is meant the comedians of the hôtel de Bourgogne, who, as well as Molière's troupe, played on Tuesdays, Fridays, and Sundays.

[9] A clever side hit at the rival comedians who had been satirising our poet, and who had no better opportunity of studying Molière, than he of studying them.

Mad. Deb. I never heard this talked of.

Mol. I had the idea once in my head, but I dismissed it as a trifle, a jest, which might have raised a laugh.

Mad. Deb. Give me a specimen, as you have given it to others.

Mol. We have no time now.

Mad. Deb. Just a word or two!

Mol. I thought of a comedy in which there should have been a poet, whose part I would have taken myself, coming to offer a piece to a strolling company fresh from the provinces. "Have you actors and actresses," he was to say, "capable of doing justice to a play? For my play is a play . . ." "Oh sir," the comedians were to answer, "we have ladies and gentlemen who have passed muster wherever we have been." "And who plays the Kings amongst you?" "There is an actor who sometimes undertakes it." "Who? That well-made young man? Surely you jest. You want a King who is very fat, and as big as four men. A king, by Jove, well stuffed out. A king of vast circumference, who could fill a throne handsomely.[10] Only fancy a well-made king! There is one great fault to begin with; but let me hear him recite a dozen lines." Then the actor should repeat for example, some lines of the king in Nicomède:[11]

> "I say, Araspus, he has too well served me,
> Has raised my power . . ."

and so on, in the most natural manner he could. Then the poet:—"What? Call you that reciting? You are joking. You should say things with an emphasis. Listen

[10] An allusion to Montfleury, an actor of the hôtel de Bourgogne who was very stout, and of whom one of his contemporaries said: "He is so fat, that it takes several days to give him a sound beating."

[11] *Nicomède* is a tragedy of Corneille. These lines are said by Prusias, and the passage is Act ii., Scene 1.

to me." [*He imitates Montfleury, a comedian of the hôtel de Bourgogne*]

"I say, Araspus," &c.

"Do you see this attitude? Observe that well. There, lay the proper stress on the last line; that is what elicits approbation, and makes the public applaud you." "But, sir," the actor was to answer, "methinks a King who is conversing alone with the captain of his guards talks a little more mildly, and hardly uses this demoniacal tone." "You do not understand it. Go and speak in your way, and see if you get an atom of applause." "Ah, let us hear a scene between a lover and his mistress." On which an actor and actress should have played a scene together—that of Camilla and Curiatius:—[12]

"Dost go, dear soul, and does this fatal honour
So charm thee at the cost of all our bliss?
Ah! now too well I see, etc. . . . ."

—like the other, as naturally as they could. And the poet would break out: "You are joking; that is good for nothing. This is how you ought to recite it:" [*Imitating Mad. de Beauchâteau, an actress of the hôtel de Bourgogne*]

"Dost go, dear soul, &c.

"Nay, but I know thee better, etc.[13] . .

"See how natural and impassioned this is. Admire the smiling face she maintains in the deepest affliction." There, that was my idea; and my poet should have run through all the actors in the same manner.

[12] Personages from *Les Horaces*, a tragedy by P. Corneille.

[13] Madeleine du Bouget, the wife of Beauchâteau, the actor, a very handsome and clever actress, played the princesses in tragedy, as well as the *ingénues* in comedy. She died at Versailles, on the 6th of January, 1683. The first two lines, "Dost go," are from *les Horaces* (Act ii., Scene 5); the third is the answer of Curiatius, to whom Camilla replies in a speech beginning with, "Nay, but I know thee better." Molière probably imitated the actor Beauchâteau as Curiatius.

Mad. Deb. I like the notion; and I recognised some of them by the very first lines. Do go on.

Mol. [*Imitating Beauchâteau in some lines from the Cid.*[14]]

"Pierced to the centre of my heart," &c.

And do you know this man in *Sertorius's* Pompey? [*Imitating Hauteroche, a comedian of the hôtel de Bourgogne*][15]

"The enmity which either faction sways
Engenders here no honour," &c.

Mad. Deb. I think I know him a little.

Mol. And this one? [*Imitating de Villiers, another comedian of the hôtel de Bourgogne*[16]]

"My lord, Polybius is dead," &c.[17]

Mad. Deb. Yes, I know who he is; but I fancy there are some amongst them whom you would find it hard to mimic.

Mol. Good Heavens! there is not one that cannot be had somewhere, if I had studied them well.[18] But you make me lose precious time. Pray, let us think of ourselves, and not amuse ourselves any longer with talking. [*To La Grange*] Take care how you act the part of Marquis with me.

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[14] *The Cid and Sertorius* were two tragedies by P. Corneille.

[15] Noel de Breton, sieur de Hauteroche, born in Paris in 1617, was of very good family, and became a comedian against their wish. After many adventures he came to Paris, where he played, first at the théâtre du Marais, and afterwards at the hôtel du Bourgogne, chiefly the confidants of the tragic heroes. Hauteroche was of lofty stature, and remarkably lean; he was also an author, and died in 1707, at the age of ninety years.

[16] De Villiers answered Molière in *la Vengeance des Marquis.*

[17] This is taken from the third scene of the fifth act of *Œdipe*, a tragedy by Corneille, but it ought to be "King Polybius is dead."

[18] The only actor of the hôtel de Bourgogne whom Molière does not imitate is Floridor, who was really excellent.

Mad. Mol. Marquises again ?

Mol. Yes, Marquises again. What the deuce would you have me hit on for a character acceptable to the audience ? The Marquis in these days is the funny character in a comedy ; and as, in all the old comedies, there was always a clownish servant to make the spectators laugh, so now, in all our pieces, there must be always a ridiculous Marquis to divert the company.

Mad. Béj. It is true, that cannot be left out.

Mol. As to you, Mademoiselle . . .

Mad. Dup. Nay, as to me, I shall act wretchedly ; I do not know why you have given me this ceremonious part.

Mol. Good Heavens ! Mademoiselle, that is what you said when you had your part in *The School for Wives criticised* ;[19] yet you acquitted yourself admirably, and everyone agreed that it could not be better done. Believe me, this will be the same ; you will play it better than you think.

Mad. Dup. How can that be ? There is no one in the world less ceremonious than I.

Mol. True ; and that is how you prove yourself to be an excellent actress, representing well a character which is opposed to your mood. Try then, all of you, to catch the spirit of your parts aright, and to imagine that you are what you represent. [*To Du Croisy*] You play a poet, and you ought to be taken up with your part ; to mark the pedantic air which is maintained amidst the converse of the fashionable world ; that sententious voice and precision of pronunciation, dwelling on every syllable, and not letting a letter drop from the strictest spelling. [*To*

[19] Madame Duparc played the part of Climène in *The School for Wives criticised.*

Brécourt] As for you, you play a courtier, as you have already done in *The School for Wives criticised;* that is, you must assume a sedate air, and a natural tone of voice, and gesticulate as little as possible. [*To La Grange*] As for you, I have nothing to say to you. [*To Mademoiselle Béjart*] You represent one of those women who, provided they are not making love, think everything else is permitted to them; who are always proudly entrenched in their prudery, looking up and down on everyone, and holding all the good qualities that others possess as nothing in comparison with a miserable honour which no one cares about. Keep this character always before your eyes, that you may show all its tricks. [*To Mademoiselle Debrie*] As for you, you play one of those women who think they are the most virtuous persons in the world, so long as they save appearances; who believe that the sin lies only in the scandal; who would quietly carry on their intrigues in the style of an honourable attachment, and call those friends whom others call lovers. [*To Mademoiselle Molière*] You play the same character as in *The School for Wives criticised,* and I have nothing more to say to you than to Mademoiselle Duparc. [*To Mademoiselle Du Croisy*] As for you, you represent one of those people who are sweetly charitable to every one, who always give a passing sting with their tongues, and who would be very sorry if they let their neighbours be well spoken of. I believe you will not acquit yourself badly in this part. [*To Mademoiselle Hervé*] For you, you are the maid of the *précieuse,* who is always putting her spoke into the conversation, and picks up all her mistress's expressions, as well as she can. I tell you all your characters, that you may impress them strongly on your minds. Let us now begin to rehearse, and see how it will do. Oh, here comes a bore. This is all we wanted!

SCENE II.

LA THORILLIÈRE, MOLIÈRE, BRÉCOURT, LA GRANGE, DU CROISY, MAD. DUPARC, MAD. BÉJART, MAD. DEBRIE, MAD. MOLIÈRE, MAD. DU CROISY, MAD. HERVÉ.

La Thor. Good day, Molière.

Mol. Sir, your servant. [*Aside*] Plague take the man.

La Thor. How goes it?

Mol. Very well. What can I do for you? [*To the actresses*] Ladies, do not . . . .

La Thor. I come from a place where I have been praising you up.

Mol. I am obliged to you. [*Aside*] The devil take you! [*To the actors*] Pray take care . . .

La Thor. You play a new piece to-night?

Mol. Yes, sir. [*To the actresses*] Do not forget . . .

La Thor. The King got you to do it?

Mol. Yes, sir. [*To the actors*] Pray remember . . .

La Thor. What do you call it?

Mol. Yes, sir.

La Thor. I ask what you call it?

Mol. Oh! Upon my word I do not know. [*To the actresses*] You must, if you please . . .

La Thor. How are you going to be dressed?

Mol. As you see. [*To the actors*] I beg you . . .

La Thor. When do you begin?

Mol. When the King comes. [*Aside*] The deuce take him and his questions.

La Thor. When do you think he will come?

Mol. May the quinsy choke me if I know, sir!

La Thor. Do you not know . . .

Mol. Look here, sir; I am the most ignorant man in the world. I swear I know nothing of anything about

what you may ask. [*Aside*] I am going mad. This wretch comes cross-examining me in his cool way, never dreaming that I may have other things to attend to.

La Thor. Ladies, your servant.

Mol. Ah good! now he is on the other side.

La Thor. [*To Mademoiselle Du Croisy*] You are as handsome as a little angel. Do you both play to-day? [*Looking at Mademoiselle Hervé.*]

Mad. Du C. Yes, sir.

La Thor. Without you, the comedy would not be worth much.[20]

Mol. [*Whispering to the actresses*] Can you not send that man about his business?

Mad. Deb. Sir, we have a rehearsal on.

La Thor. Oh, Zounds, I shall not prevent you; you have only to go on.

Mad. Deb. But . . .

La Thor. Nay, nay, I should be sorry to trouble any one. Do what you have to do without scruple.

Mad. Deb. Yes; but . . .

La Thor. I assure you, I am a man of no ceremony; and you can rehearse what you like.

Mol. Sir, these ladies hesitate to tell you that they would much prefer that no one should be present during this rehearsal.

La Thor. But why? You have nothing to fear from me.

Mol. Sir, it is their custom; you will be the better pleased when the thing takes you by surprise.

La Thor. Then I shall go and tell them you are ready.

Mol. By no means, sir; do not be in a hurry, pray.

[20] This compliment is addressed to Mesdemoiselles Du Croisy and Hervé, two of the weakest actresses in Molière's troupe.

SCENE III.

MOLIÈRE, BRÉCOURT, LA GRANGE, DU CROISY, MAD. DUPARC, MAD. BÉJART, MAD. DEBRIE, MAD. MOLIÈRE, MAD. DU CROISY, MAD. HERVÉ.

Mol. Oh dear, this world is full of impertinent people! But now come, let us begin. In the first place, then, imagine that the scene is in the King's antechamber; for it is a place where plenty of amusing things go on every day. It is easy to introduce there whomsoever we please; and reasons can even be found to explain the appearance of the ladies whom I bring in. The comedy opens with the meeting of two Marquises. [*To La Grange*] Be sure and do not forget to come from that side, as I told you, with what they call a distinguished air, combing your wig, and humming a tune between your teeth. La, la, la, la, la, la, la! Just move aside, the rest of you; for a couple of Marquises require room, and they are not the sort of persons to be satisfied with a small space. [*To La Grange*] Now then, speak.

La Gr. "Good day, Marquis."

Mol. Oh dear! That is not the way in which Marquises talk. It must be a little higher. Most of these gentlemen affect a special tone to distinguish themselves from the vulgar. "Good day, Marquis." Try again.

La Gr. "Good day, Marquis."

Mol. "Ah, Marquis, your most obedient."

La Gr. "What are you doing there?"

Mol. "'Sdeath, you may see. I am waiting until all these persons have cleared away from the door, that I may show my face there."

La Gr. "Zounds! what a crowd! I do not care to go and push myself through, I had rather wait till the last."

Mol. "There is a score there who have no chance of

getting in, but they take good care to press forward, and occupy all the approaches to the door."

La Gr. "Let us call out our names to the door-keeper, so that he may summon us."

Mol. "That may do for you; but I do not wish Molière to take me off."

La Gr. "Yet I think, Marquis, that it is you he takes off in *The School for Wives criticised.*"

Mol. "Me? Most mighty potentate! it is your very self."

La Gr. "Ah! upon my word, you are kind, to fit me with your own character."

Mol. "Death, you are amusing, to give me what belongs to yourself."

La Gr. [*Laughing*] "Ah, ha! How entertaining!"

Mol. [*Laughing*] "Ah, ha! How comical!"

La Gr. "What! you mean to maintain that it is not you who are exhibited in the Marquis of *The School for Wives criticised?*"

Mol. "Just so; it is I. 'Detestable; egad! detestable! Cream tart!' Oh, it is I, it is I, assuredly it is I!"

La Gr. "Yes, it is you. You need not jest; and we shall lay a wager, if you like, and see which of us is right."

Mol. "Well then, what will you bet?"

La Gr. "I bet a hundred pistoles that it is you."

Mol. "And I bet a hundred it is you."

La Gr. "Money down!"

Mol. "Money down! Ninety on Amyntas, and ten cash."

La Gr. "Content!"

Mol. "Done, then."

La Gr. "Your money runs a great risk."

Mol. "Yours is in danger."

La Gr. "Who shall be umpire?"

Mol. "Here is a gentleman who shall decide. Chevalier!"

Bré. "What is it?"

Mol. Good. Here is the other who assumes the tone of a Marquis. Did I not tell you that you were playing a part in which you had to speak naturally?

Bré. So you did.

Mol. Now then. "Chevalier . . ."

Bré. "What is it?"

Mol. "Just decide betwixt us on a wager we have made."

Bré. "What wager?"

Mol. "We cannot agree who is the Marquis in Molière's *School for Wives criticised.* He bets that it is I, and I bet that it is he."

Bré. "Well, I decide that it is neither the one nor the other. You are fools, both of you, to wish that these caps should fit; this is just what I heard Molière complaining of the other day, when he was talking to some people who charged him with the same thing. He said that nothing annoyed him so much as to be accused of animadverting upon anyone in the portraits he drew; that his design is to paint manners without striking at individuals, and that all the characters whom he introduces are imaginary—phantoms, so to speak, which he clothes according to his fancy in order to please his audience; that he would be much vexed to have hit any one through them; and that if aught could sicken him of writing comedies, it would be the resemblances that people always insisted on finding, and on which his enemies maliciously tried to fix attention, in order to do him an injury with certain persons of whom he had never thought. And, indeed, I think he is right: for why, pray, should you apply all his actions and words, and seek to draw

him into quarrels by publicly declaring that he is showing up so-and-so, when the facts are such as will fit a hundred people? As the business of comedy is to represent in a general way all the faults of men, and especially of the men of our day, it is impossible for Molière to create any character not to be met with in the world; and if he must be accused of thinking of everyone in whom are to be found the faults which he delineates, he must, of course, give up writing comedies." [21]

Mol. "Upon my word, Chevalier, you wish to justify Molière, and spare our friend here."

La Gr. "Not at all. It is you he spares; and we shall find another umpire."

Mol. "So be it. But tell me, Chevalier, do you not think Molière is exhausted by this time, and that he will find no more subjects for . . . ?"

Bré. "No more subjects? Ah, dear Marquis, we shall always go on providing him with plenty; and we are scarcely taking the course to grow wise, for all that he can do or say."

Mol. Stay. You must be more emphatic with this passage. Just listen to me for a moment.[22] "And that he will find no more subjects for . . .—No more subjects? Ah, dear Marquis, we shall always go on providing him with plenty, and we are scarcely taking the course to grow

[21] This is an intentional and very forcible self-defence upon the part of the author, to which the nature of the comedy lends itself admirably. No doubt, Molière had much ado to keep himself out of an endless series of personal quarrels with those whom his satire affected; and though one object of *The School for Wives criticised* was to lay stress on the general meaning of his delineations, its immediate effect was, doubtless, to aggravate the annoyance of his lay-figures. The *Impromptu* could not fail to allay these grievances, and to conciliate the author's contemporaries.

[22] This is very skilful; Molière now takes up his own argument in his proper person, thus challenging the closer attention of his audience.

wise, for all that he can do or say. Do you imagine that he has exhausted in his comedies all the follies of men; and without leaving the Court, are there not a score of characters which he has not yet touched upon? For instance, has he not those who profess the greatest friendship possible, and who, when they turn their backs, think it a piece of gallantry to tear each other to pieces? Has he not those unmitigated sycophants, those vapid flatterers, who never give a pinch of salt with their praises, and whose flatteries have a sickly sweetness which nauseate those who hear them? Has he not the craven courtiers of favourites, the treacherous worshippers of fortune, who praise you in prosperity, and run you down in adversity? Has he not those who are always discontented with the Court, those useless hangers-on, those troublesome officious creatures, those people who can count up no services except importunities, and who expect to be rewarded for having laid a ten years' siege to the King? Has he not those who fawn on all the world alike, who hand their civilities from left to right, who run after all whom they see, with the same salutations, and the same professions of friendship? 'Sir, your most obedient. Sir, I am entirely at your service. Consider me wholly yours, dear sir. Reckon me, sir, as the warmest of your friends. Sir, I am enchanted to embrace you. Ah! sir, I did not see you. Oblige me by making use of me; be assured I am wholly yours. You are the one man in the world whom I most esteem. There is no one whom I honour like you. I entreat you to believe it. I beg of you not to doubt it. Your servant. Your humble slave.' Oh, Marquis, Marquis, Molière will always have more subjects than he needs; and all that he has aimed at as yet is but a trifle to the treasure which is within his reach." That is something of the style in which it should be played.

Bré. It is sufficient.

Mol. Go on.

Bré. "Here are Climène and Eliza."

Mol. [*To Mesdemoiselles Duparc and Molière*] Hereupon you two are to come up. [*To Mademoiselle Duparc*] Be sure, you, to attitudinise well, and observe a good many formalities. That will constrain you a little; but it cannot be helped. One must sometimes do violence to oneself.

Mad. Mol. "Madam, I easily recognised you a long way off, and perceived from your bearing that it could be no other than you."

Mad. Dup. "You see, I have come to wait for a man with whom I have a little matter of business."

Mad. Mol. "That is just my case."

Mol. Ladies, these boxes will serve you for arm-chairs.

Mad. Dup. "Come, Madam, I beg you to be seated."

Mad. Mol. "After you, Madam."

Mol. Good. After these little dumb shows, let each take a seat, and speak sitting, whilst the Marquises must sometimes get up and sometimes sit down again, in accordance with their natural restlessness. "'Sdeath, Chevalier, you ought to physic your rolls." [23]

Bré. "How so?"

Mol. "They look ill."

Bré. "I salute your punstership."

Mad. Mol. "Heavens, Madam, I do think your complexion dazzling white, and your lips of a marvellous flame-colour."

Mad. Dup. "Ah! what is that you say, Madam? Do not look at me; I am frightfully ugly to-day."

Mad. Mol. "Do, Madam, just raise your hood."

Mad. Dup. "Fie! I am frightful, I tell you, and shock even myself."

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[23] See Vol. I., pages 233 and 240, notes 23 and 33.

Mad. Mol. "You are so lovely."

Mad. Dup. "No, no."

Mad. Mol. "Show yourself."

Mad. Dup. "Oh, pray do not."

Mad. Mol. "Please do."

Mad. Dup. "Heavens, no!"

Mad. Mol. "Yes, do."

Mad. Dup. "How troublesome you are!"

Mad. Mol. "Just for an instant."

Mad. Dup. "Ah!"

Mad. Mol. "You positively shall show yourself. We cannot do without seeing you."

Mad. Dup. "Good gracious, what an odd creature you are! What you wish you wish so desperately."

Mad. Mol. "Ah, Madam, I am sure you need not dread the broad daylight. How wicked people are to say that you use any paint! I shall certainly be able to contradict them now."

Mad. Dup. "Lackaday, I do not so much as know what you mean by using paint! But where are those ladies going?"

Mad. Deb. "Permit us, ladies, to give you in passing the most agreeable news conceivable. Here is Mr Lysidas, who has just told us that some one has made a play against Molière, which the grand company are going to act."

Mol. "It is true, they wished to read it to me
A certain Br . . . Brou . . . Brossaut has written it."

Du Cr. "Sir, it is advertised under the name of Boursault; but, to let you into the secret, many people have contributed to this piece, and one is disposed to form pretty high expectations of it. Since all authors and actors look on Molière as their greatest enemy, we all unite against him to do him an ill turn. Each of us has added a stroke to his portrait; but we have taken good care not to put our names

to it. It would have been too much honour for him to succumb, before the eyes of the world, to the efforts of a combined Parnassus; and so, to make his discomfiture more ignominious, we thought of picking out on purpose an author without repute."

Mad. Dup. "For my part, I confess that I am greatly rejoiced at it."

Mol. "And so am I. Gad, the mocker shall be mocked; upon my word, he shall have a rap over the knuckles."

Mad. Dup. "That will teach him to satirize everybody. What! This impertinent fellow will have it that women have no wit. He condemns all our lofty modes of expression, and makes out that we are always speaking in a humdrum way."

Mad. Deb. "Speech matters nothing; but he blames all our intimacies, however harmless they may be; and according to him, it is criminal to possess merit."

Mad. Du C. "It is unbearable. Women can do nothing henceforth. Why cannot he let our husbands be at peace, without opening their eyes and making them notice things of which they never thought?"

Mad. Béj. "All this is a trifle; but he satirizes even virtuous women; the wicked buffoon styles them 'respectable she-devils.'" [24]

Mad. Mol. "He is an impertinent wretch. He deserves all he gets."

Du Cr. "This play, Madam, must needs be supported; and the comedians of the hôtel . . ."

Mad. Dup. "Oh, let them have no fear. I will lay my life on the success of this piece."

Mad. Mol. "You are right, Madam. Too many people

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[24] See *The School for Wives*, Act iv. Scene 8, page 195.

are interested in thinking it good. You may judge whether all those who believe themselves to have been satirized by Molière will not take the opportunity of avenging themselves on him by applauding this comedy."

Bré. [*Ironically*] "No doubt; and for my part I can answer for a dozen Marquises, six *précieuses*, a score of coquettes, and thirty victimised husbands, who will not fail to applaud."

Mad. Mol. "Exactly so. Why should he go and offend all these people, and especially the victimised husbands, who are the best people in the world?"[25]

Mol. "Gad, I have been told that they will have a rub both at him and at all his plays, in fine style, and that actors and authors, from great to small, are deucedly savage against him."

Mad. Mol. "That just serves him right. Why does he write wicked pieces that all Paris goes to see, and in which he paints people so well, that everybody knows himself? Why does he not make plays like those of Mr Lysidas? He would have no one against him, and all the authors would speak well of him. It is true that such plays do not draw large audiences; but, on the other hand, they are always well written; nobody writes against them, and all who see them are desperately anxious to think them fine."

Du Cr. "It is true that I have the advantage of making no enemies, and that all my works are approved of by the learned."[26]

Mad. Mol. "You are justified in being satisfied with yourself. That is worth more than all the applause of the

[25] One of the commentators of Molière says that the proof that our author was not yet jealous is to be found in the words he puts into his wife's mouth. I imagine Mad. Molière spoke ironically.

[26] On page 315 Molière, in answer to Mad. Debrie's remarks, replies for Lysidas, here it is Du Croisy; this seems a contradiction.

public, and than all the money that Molière's pieces may draw. What does it matter to you whether people come to see your plays, so long as they are praised by your professional friends?"

La Gr. "But when will *The Painter's Portrait* be acted?"

Du Cr. "I do not know; but I intend to appear in the front seat, and cry, This is something like a play!"

Mol. "Gad, and I too."

La Gr. "So do I, as I hope to be saved."

Mad. Dup. "For my part, I shall show myself there, as I ought; and I will answer for a round of applause which shall drown all adverse opinion. It is really the least we can do, to assist with our approbation the avenger of our cause."

Mad. Mol. "Well said!"

Mad. Deb. "That is what we must all do."

Mad. Bej. "Assuredly."

Mad. Du C. "Undoubtedly."

Mad. Her. "No quarter to this mimic."

Mol. "Upon my word, Chevalier, your Molière must hide his head."

Bré. "Who? He? I promise you, Marquis, that he intends to take a seat upon the stage, and laugh with the rest at the portrait they have drawn of him." [27]

Mol. "Gad, then, he will laugh on the wrong side of his face."

Bré. "Come, come; perchance he will find more cause for laughter than you think. I was shown the play; and as everything amusing in it was actually taken from Molière, the pleasure which this will afford, will not be likely to offend him; for, as to the parts where they set themselves

[27] De Villiers, in the *Vengeance des Marquis*, mentions that Molière took one day a seat on the stage of the hôtel de Bourgogne to listen to Boursault's *Painter's Portrait*.

to blacken him, 'I am very much mistaken if this is applauded by any one. And as for all the people whom they have tried to set against him, of whom, it is said, he has drawn too faithful likenesses, not only is it in bad taste, but I never saw anything more ridiculous, or worse done; I never yet thought that it was a reproach to a dramatic author to depict men too well."

La Gr. "The actors told me they expected a rejoinder from him, and that . . ."

Bré. "A rejoinder? Verily, I should think him a great fool if he took the trouble to reply to their invectives. Every one knows well enough from what motives they must be acting; and the best answer which he can make them is a comedy which will succeed like all the others. This is the true plan of being avenged on them; and judging from what I know of their disposition, I am sure that a new play, which will take their audiences from them, will annoy them much more than all the satires which could be written against them individually."

Mol. "But, Chevalier . . . ?"

Mad. Béj. Let me interrupt the rehearsal for a moment. [*To Molière*] May I make a suggestion? If I had been you, I should have treated the thing in another way. Every one expects a vigorous rejoinder from you; and, after the way in which they tell me you have been treated in this comedy, you were justified in saying anything against the actors; and you ought not to spare one of them.

Mol. I am annoyed to hear you speak thus. This is just the way with you ladies. You would have me fire up against them, and follow their example by rushing into invectives and insults. A great deal of honour I should get from it, and a vast deal of vexation I should bring them! Are they not quite prepared for that kind of thing? And, when they were discussing whether they should play

The Painter's Portrait, for fear of a rejoinder, did not some of them say: "Let him abuse us as much as he likes, so long as we get money?"—Is not that the mark of a soul very sensitive to shame; and should I not be well avenged by giving them what they greatly long to receive?

Mad. Deb. They complained strongly of three or four words you said of them in *The School for Wives criticised,* and *The Pretentious Young Ladies.*

Mol. It is true that these three or four words are very offensive; and they have great reason to quote them. Come, come, it is not that. The greatest harm I have done them is that I have been fortunate enough to please a little more than they would have liked; their whole conduct since we came to Paris has too clearly shown what pricks them. But let them do what they will, all their efforts cannot disturb me. They criticise my plays, so much the better; and Heaven forbid that I should ever do aught that pleased them! It would be a bad business for me.

Mad. Deb. Still there is not much pleasure in seeing one's works pulled to pieces.

Mol. What does it matter to me? Have I not got from my comedy all that I wished, since it had the good fortune to please those lofty personages whom I specially aim at pleasing? Have I not cause to be content with my lot, and are not all their censures a little too late? Does that affect me now, pray? When they attack a piece which has been successful, do they not attack the judgment of those who praised it, rather than the skill of him who wrote it?

Mad. Deb. Upon my word, I should have had a hit at that little scribe, who is rash enough to write against people who do not trouble their heads about him.

Mol. How silly you are. A fine subject for diversion monsieur Boursault would be! I should like to know how he could be tricked out to make him amusing;

and whether, if he were ridiculed on the stage, he would be fortunate enough to make any one laugh. It would be too much honour for him, to be represented before an august assembly. He would ask nothing better; and he attacks me wantonly in order to make himself known in any way. He is a man who has nothing to lose, and the actors have let him loose on me only in order to engage me in a foolish quarrel, and turn me aside, by this dodge, from other works which I have on hand; and yet you are simple enough to fall into the trap. But I shall make a public declaration on this point. I do not mean to make any reply to all their criticisms and counter-criticisms. Let them say all the evil they can of my pieces; I am quite willing. Let them take our leavings, and turn them inside out like a coat, to bring them on their own stage, and try to profit by any pleasant thing they find in them, and by a little of my good fortune; I give them leave; they have need of it, and I shall be happy to contribute to their necessities, provided they will be satisfied with what I can decently grant them. Courtesy must have its limits; and there are some things which can make neither spectators laugh, nor him of whom they are spoken. I gladly leave to them my works, my figure, my attitudes, my words, the tone of my voice, and my style of recitation, to make and say whatever they will of them, if they can snatch some profit from them. I have nothing to say against all this, and shall be delighted if this can please people; but whilst I give them all this, they must do me the favour to leave me the remainder, and not to touch on things of the nature of those upon which, I hear, they attack me in their comedies.[28] This I shall politely request of the honourable gentleman

[28] Most likely Boursault's *le Portrait du Peintre*, Montfleury's *Impromptu de l'hôtel de Condé*, and De Villiers' *la Vengeance des Marquis*, contained some personal attacks, either against Molière, his wife, or his friends, which were suppressed when those plays were printed.

who undertakes to write for them; and this is all the answer they shall have from me.

Mad. Béj. But, in a word . . .

Mol. But, in a word, you will drive me mad. Let us say no more of this. We amuse ourselves by talking when we ought to be rehearsing our comedy. Where were we? I do not remember.

Mad. Deb. You were at the very place . . .

Mol. Good Heavens, what noise do I hear? Surely the King is come! I can plainly see we shall have no time to get through it. That is what comes of our gossipping. Oh, well, you must do the best you can with the rest.

Mad. Béj. On my word, I am in such a fright, I shall never be able to play my part unless I rehearse it all.

Mol. What! You will not be able to play your part.

Mad. Béj. No.

Mad. Dup. Nor I mine.

Mad. Deb. No more shall I.

Mad. Mol. Nor I.

Mad. Her. Nor I.

Mad. Du C. Nor I.

Mol. What on earth do you mean to do? Are you all mocking me?

SCENE IV.

BÉJART, LA THORILLIÈRE, MOLIÈRE, BRÉCOURT, LA GRANGE, DU CROISY, MAD. DUPARC, MAD. BÉJART, MAD. DEBRIE, MAD. MOLIÈRE, MAD. DU CROISY, MAD. HERVÉ.

Béj. Gentlemen, I come to inform you that the King has arrived, and waits for you to begin.

Mol. Ah, sir, you see me in a terrible strait. I am distracted as I speak to you. These ladies are frightened, and say that they must rehearse their parts before commencing. We beg the favour of another moment. The King is kind, and he knows well that the piece has been done hurriedly.

SCENE V.

LA THORILLIÈRE, MOLIÈRE, BRÉCOURT, LA GRANGE, DU CROISY, MAD. DUPARC, MAD. BÉJART, MAD. DEBRIE, MAD. MOLIÈRE, MAD. DU CROISY, MAD. HERVÉ.

Mol. Oh, pray try and recover yourselves. Take courage, I entreat you.

Mad. Dup. You must go and excuse yourself.

Mol. How can I excuse myself?

SCENE VI.

A BUSYBODY, LA THORILLIÈRE, MOLIÈRE, BRÉCOURT, LA GRANGE, DU CROISY, MAD. DUPARC, MAD. BÉJART, MAD. DEBRIE, MAD. MOLIÈRE, MAD. DU CROISY, MAD. HERVÉ.

1 *Busy.* Gentlemen, begin.

Mol. At once, sir. I believe I shall go out of my mind over this precious business . . .

SCENE VII.

A SECOND BUSYBODY, LA THORILLIÈRE, MOLIÈRE, BRÉCOURT, LA GRANGE, DU CROISY, MAD. DUPARC, MAD. BÉJART, MAD. DEBRIE, MAD. MOLIÈRE, MAD. DU CROISY, MAD. HERVÉ.

2 *Busy.* Gentlemen, begin!

Mol. In a moment, sir. [*To his fellow-actors*] What, would you have me affronted . . .

SCENE VIII.

A THIRD BUSYBODY, LA THORILLIÈRE, MOLIÈRE, BRÉCOURT, LA GRANGE, DU CROISY, MAD. DUPARC, MAD. BÉJART, MAD. DEBRIE, MAD. MOLIÈRE, MAD. DU CROISY, MAD. HERVÉ.

3 *Busy.* Gentlemen, begin!

Mol. Yes, sir, that is what we are about to do. How officious these gentry are, coming and bidding us begin, when the King did not order them!

SCENE IX.

A FOURTH BUSYBODY, LA THORILLIÈRE, MOLIÈRE, BRÉCOURT, LA GRANGE, DU CROISY, MAD. DUPARC, MAD. BÉJART, MAD. DEBRIE, MAD. MOLIÈRE, MAD. DU CROISY, MAD. HERVÉ.

4 *Busy.* Gentlemen, begin!

Mol. It is done, sir. [*To his fellow-actors*] What! must I be covered with confusion . . .

SCENE X.

BÉJART, LA THORILLIÈRE, MOLIÈRE, BRÉCOURT, LA GRANGE, DU CROISY, MAD. DUPARC, MAD. BÉJART, MAD. DEBRIE, MAD. MOLIÈRE, MAD. DU CROISY, MAD. HERVÉ.

Mol. Sir, you come to bid us begin, but . . .

Béj. No, gentlemen, I come to say that the King has heard of the trouble you are in, and that, in the kindness which distinguishes him, he defers your new comedy to another time, and will be satisfied to-day with the first you can give him.

Mol. Oh, sir, you give me new life. The King bestows on us the greatest possible favour in giving us time for that which he desired; we shall all go and thank him for the extreme goodness which he displays towards us.[29]

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[29] A flattery to the Grand Monarque, heightened by what had previously been said by Molière of the impatience of Kings to taste the pleasures on which they have set their minds. (Scene 1, *ad init.*)

LE MARIAGE FORCÉ.

COMÉDIE.

THE FORCED MARRIAGE.

COMEDY IN ONE ACT.

(THE ORIGINAL IN PROSE.)

JAN. 29TH, 1664.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

The Forced Marriage is described as a *Comédie-ballet*, and was due to the request made to Molière by Louis XIV. for an entertainment in the manner of *The Bores*, in which a genuine comedy should be combined with a ballet, and wherein the Court itself might figure upon the stage. Even Louis did not disdain to show himself amongst his courtiers on special occasions of this kind, submitting himself to the direction of the dancing-masters, who held no contemptible position at the Court of the *Grand Monarque*. Molière had recently received from the royal grace a pension of a thousand livres, and he thus had more than one inducement to do his best for the young King's pleasure. It was on the 29th of January, 1664, in the drawing-room of the Queen-mother, at the Louvre, that *The Forced Marriage* was first produced. Louis, then in his twenty-sixth year, figured as one of the gipsies in the ballet. The play had three acts, with entries, and, as the King danced in it, was called the *Ballet du Roi*.

The Comedy-ballet was subsequently brought out at the Palais-Royal, at great expense, and had a run of thirteen days. But Molière had separated the comedy from the ballet, and reduced the former from three acts to one. For the singing magician and the demons who frightened Sganarelle into trying to get out of his marriage engagement, the poet substituted the twelfth scene, introducing Alcidas, who is called Lycante in the ballet.

The comedy supplies us with yet another of those senile gallants whom the poet delights to paint; though in one of his preceding comedies, *The School for Husbands* (see page 1), the deceived gallant, Sganarelle, is twenty years younger than the wise Ariste, who is not betrayed. The comic element in *The Forced Marriage* springs, not only from the incongruity of the amorous old suitor and the coquettish young girl, but also from the fact that the butt of the piece discovers his mistake before marriage, into which he is nevertheless forced with the full knowledge of the fate that is awaiting him. The idea, at all events up to the eve of the catastrophe, had been worked out by Rabelais, whom Molière follows with considerable closeness. In the ninth chapter of the third book of the older writer's work, "Panurge asketh counsel of Pantagruel whether he should marry, yea or nay?" and whether, if married, he will be able to escape "*la disgrace dont on ne plaint personne.*" Pantagruel (the Geronimo of the play) gives his advice in the same com-

plaisant manner as Sganarelle's crony,—"Then do not marry;" "Then marry, in the name of God."

What Coleridge says of this chapter of Rabelais may well be applied to the first scene of Molière's play:—"Pantagruel (Geronimo) stands for the reason, as contradistinguished from the understanding and choice, that is, from Panurge (Sganarelle); and the humour consists in the latter asking advice of the former, on a subject in which the reason can only give the inevitable conclusion, the syllogistic *ergo*, from the premises provided by the understanding itself, which puts each case so as of necessity to predetermine the verdict thereon. This chapter, independently of the allegory, is an exquisite satire on the spirit in which people commonly ask advice."

But Rabelais himself was not the first to adopt this illustration of wavering advice; for we find similar scenes in Poggio, and in the *Itinerarium Paradisi* of Raulin, a preacher of the beginning of the fifteenth century, in his sermon *De Viduitate*.

The two philosophers are not quite original creations, Marphurius being no other than the Ephectic and Pyrrhonian sage Trouillogan, whom Rabelais delineates in the thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth chapters of the third book of *Pantagruel*. It has been often said that the scenes between Sganarelle and the two philosophers are too farcical, and only induce laughter. But Molière never acted more courageously than in writing those scenes; for he openly attacked the Aristotelian philosophy, so strongly defended by the University of Paris, which intended to get confirmed a sentence of the parliament of Paris, of the 4th of September 1624, by which all those who attacked the Aristotelian doctrines were condemned to death. Besides this, the above-mentioned scenes are connected with several philosophical observations, to be found in *The Pretentious Young Ladies* (see Vol. I.), and in *The Blue Stockings* (see Vol. VI.). Trissotin and Vadius, in the latter play, belong to the same race as the illustrious Pancrace and Marphurius.

According to some commentators of Molière, an adventure of the Count de Grammont, when on the point of leaving England, has given to our author the chief idea of his piece. This Count, being banished from the court of Louis XIV., went to that of Charles II., and there became engaged to Miss Hamilton, a grand-daughter of the Duke of Ormond. Being suddenly recalled to France, he forgot his engagement and left at once. But the two brothers of the young lady immediately started after him, came up with him at Dover, and asked him "if he had not forgotten anything in London?" His answer was, "Pardon me, gentlemen, I have forgotten to marry your sister." He returned with them, married Miss Hamilton, and went back with her to France.

Tradition states that the original of the over-polite Alcidas was a certain Marquis de la Trousse, killed at the siege of Tortosa in 1648, and who was so polite that he always used compliments when fighting a duel, and expressed his great sorrow whilst killing his opponent.

In the seventh volume of "Select Comedies of M. de Molière," pub-

lished in London, 1732, this play is dedicated to the Right Honourable the Lady Harvey, in the following words :—

MADAM,

YOU will not, I hope, be frighted at the sight of a Dedication with Your Name before it, when I promise Your LADYSHIP, that I am not going to give You the Pain of reading Your own Character :—tho' at the same time, I must assure You, that it is with great reluctance I relinquish so fair an Opportunity of describing everything that is lovely, desirable, and praiseworthy, and forbear setting before the Beauties of the present Age a charming Pattern, which the greatest and best of them might be proud to copy. But, for fear I should be unable to resist the Temptation, if I think any longer of Lady HARVEY, I'll conclude this Address, with desiring your LADYSHIP'S Acceptance of one of MOLIERE'S Comedies, which has both Wit and Humour in the *Original*. . . . . I hope, too, they are not quite lost in the *Translation*.

Only give me leave to add, that I am, MADAM, your Ladyship's most obedient, and most humble servant, THE TRANSLATOR.

Ravenscroft (see Vol. I., *The Love-Tiff*, Introductory Notice, p. 108) has imitated part of this play in his *Scaramouch a Philosopher, Harlequin a School-Boy, Bravo, Merchant and Magician*, acted at the Theatre Royal, 1677. This Comedy is a medley of three of Molière's plays, *The Forced Marriage*, *The Citizen who apes the Nobleman*, and *The Tricks of Scapin*. This, with a Harlequin, borrowed from an Italian farce, who jumps about as in a pantomime, but speaks, forms the whole play. It appears not to have had much success. The actors were dilatory in getting it up, and the theatre in Dorset Garden forestalled them by bringing out a translation of Molière's *Tricks of Scapin*. This is what the Prologue says:

Very unfortunate this play has bin,
A slippery trick was play'd us by Scapin,
Whilst here our actors made a long delay,
When some were idle, others run away,
The City House comes out with half our Play.

The English dramatist ends :

Let both French and Italians share the fame,
But if 't be bad, let them too bear the blame.

Mrs Centlivre, who was then Mrs Carroll, has, in her *Love's Contrivance, or Le Médecin malgré lui*, acted at Drury Lane, June 4, 1703, borrowed nearly everything from Molière's *Forced Marriage*, and from *The Physician in spite of Himself*, (see Vol. iii.), with a reminiscence *of Sganarelle* (see Vol. I., page 267). She impudently states in the Preface—"Some scenes, I confess, are partly taken from Molière, and I dare be bold to say it has not suffered in the translation. . . . The French have that light airiness in their Temper, that the least Glimpse of Wit sets them a-laughing, when 'twould not make us so much as smile ; so that where I found the stile too poor, I endeavoured to give it a Turn." In the Prologue she says, however—

So feverish is the Humour of the Town
It surfeits of a Play ere three Days run.

At Locket's, Brown's, and at Pontack's[1] enquire,
What modish Kick-shaws the nice Beaus desire,
What famed Ragouts, what new-invented Sallad
Has best pretensions to regale the Palate.
If we present you with a Medley here,
A hodge-podge Dish serv'd up in China Ware,
We hope 'twill please, 'cause like your Bills of Fare.

Sganarelle is called, in the English comedy, Sir Toby Doubtful, and Geronimo, Octavio. The only new, and perhaps original, thing in *Love's Contrivance* is Bellmie's former servant, Martin, hiding a letter in an orange, and pretending to sell fruit, and the trick being discovered by Selfwill, father to Lucinda, the heroine of the play.

Another imitation, *An Hour before Marriage*, was written by an Irish gentleman, and brought out at Covent Garden, January 25, 1772, with a prologue by Colman. The piece was very unfavourably received, and not allowed to be finished. Why, it is difficult to say, for it is a very good comedy in two acts. The character of Sir Andrew Melville is drawn cleverly, and the nice way in which, on meeting Elwood, he claims first the long-established friendship, the early and close intimacy "that has subsisted between us from our very childhood," but denies this friendship when he finds out that Elwood is poor, is well and originally delineated. Very forcibly also is Miss Melville's (Dorimène) brother boasting of his ancient descent, which is not in the French play. The eighth scene of Molière's play is likewise well imitated by Mr Tardy, the lawyer, and Stanley; whilst the 15th and 16th scenes are thrown into one in the English version, the characters of Alcantor and Alcidas having been combined in the personage of Sir Andrew Melville.

The Irish Widow is another imitation of Molière's *Forced Marriage*, written by David Garrick. The character of Widow Brady is skilfully drawn; it is she who, dressed in the uniform of a lieutenant, frightens poor Whittle; whilst in the French play, it is Alcidas, Dorimène's brother, and not Dorimène herself, who compels Sganarelle either to fight or to marry.

Some scenes of Molière's play are also borrowed in *Love without Interest*, or *The Man too hard for the Master*. The author of this piece is unknown; but the dedication is subscribed, Penkethman, and is directed to six lords, six knights, and twenty-four esquires; yet, notwithstanding this splendid patronage, it met with very little success on its appearance at the Theatre Royal.[2]

Shadwell, in *The Sullen Lovers* (see Introductory Notice to *The Bores*, page 85), has also partly imitated the fourth and sixth scenes of *The Forced Marriage*.

All the imitations from Molière, attempted in the different plays, will be found in the Appendix.

[1] Three noted restaurants of that time. The last one is mentioned in Sir Walter Scott's "Fortunes of Nigel."

[2] Baker, Reed, and Jones, "Biographica Dramatica," 1812, ii., p. 391.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SGANARELLE.

GERONIMO.

ALCANTOR, *father to Dorimène.*

ALCIDAS, *brother to Dorimène.*

LYCASTE, *in love with Dorimène.*

PANCRACE, *an Aristotelian Philosopher.*

MARPHURIUS, *a Pyrrhonian Philosopher.*

DORIMÈNE, *a young coquette, betrothed to Sganarelle.*

TWO GIPSIES.

The Scene is in a Public Place.

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[3] Molière played the part of Sganarelle. According to the inventory taken after his death, and given by M. Eud. Soulié, in his *Recherches sur Molière*, we find "a dress for *The Forced Marriage*, composed of breeches and cloak of olive-colour, lined with green, adorned with violet and plate buttons, and a satin skirt with deep yellow-coloured flowers, with the same kind of buttons, and a belt."

THE FORCED MARRIAGE.

(*LE MARIAGE FORCÉ.*)

SCENE I.

SGANARELLE, GERONIMO.[4]

Sgan. [*Speaking behind the scenes as he enters*] I shall be back in a moment. Take good care of the house, and let everything go on quite regularly. If any one brings me money, come for me quickly at Mr Geronimo's; and if any one comes to ask for any, tell him I am out, and shall not be back to-day.

SCENE II.

SGANARELLE, GERONIMO.

Ger. [*Having heard the last words of Sganarelle*] That is a very prudent order.

Sgan. Ah! Geronimo, well met. I was going to your house to look for you.

Ger. And why, pray?

Sgan. To tell you of something I have in my mind, and ask your advice about it.

Ger. Very willingly. I am glad we have met; we can speak here at our ease.

Sgan. Pray, be covered then. The business is about something of importance which has been proposed to me. It is well to do nothing without the advice of one's friends.

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[4] See Appendix, Note A.

Ger. I am obliged to you for having chosen me. You have only to tell me what it is.

Sgan. But, first of all, I must implore you not to flatter me, but to tell me your opinion candidly.

Ger. Since you wish it, I will.

Sgan. I know nothing worse than a friend who does not speak frankly.

Ger. You are right.

Sgan. Now-a-days, we meet few sincere friends.

Ger. That is true.

Sgan. Promise me, then, Geronimo, to speak with all frankness.

Ger. I promise.

Sgan. Swear on your word.

Ger. Ay, on the word of a friend. Now, do tell me your business.

Sgan. I wish to have your opinion whether I shall do well to marry.

Ger. Who? You?

Sgan. Yes, I myself. What is your advice on the subject?

Ger. First of all, I beg you to tell me one thing.

Sgan. What is that?

Ger. How old do you think you may be now?

Sgan. I?

Ger. Yes.

Sgan. Why, really I do not know; but I am in very good health.

Ger. What! Do you not know your age, within a year or two?

Sgan. No. Who thinks about his age?

Ger. Hem! Just tell me, please, how old you were when we first became acquainted?

Sgan. Oh, I was only twenty then.

Ger. How long were we together at Rome?

Sgan. Eight years.

Ger. How long did you stay in England?

Sgan. Seven years.

Ger. And in Holland, where you went next?

Sgan. Five years and a-half.

Ger. How long is it since you returned?

Sgan. I came back in "fifty-two."

Ger. From "fifty-two" to "sixty-four"[5] makes twelve years, I think. Five years in Holland make seventeen; seven years in England make twenty-four; eight years for our stay in Rome make thirty-two; and twenty—your age when we became acquainted—make just fifty-two years. So, Sganarelle, according to your own confession, you are in about your fifty-second or fifty-third year.

Sgan. Who? I? It cannot be.

Ger. By Jove, the reckoning is exact; and so I must tell you candidly, and as a friend, as you made me promise, that marriage is hardly in your line. It is a thing about which young people ought to think seriously before they engage in it; but persons at your time of life ought not to think of it at all. If, as some say, marriage is the greatest of all follies, I know of nothing more ridiculous than to commit this folly at a season when we ought to be most prudent. To be brief, I shall tell you my idea in a few words. I advise you not to dream of marrying; I should think you the silliest man in the world if, after remaining free up to this time, you were to go and burden yourself now with the heaviest of all chains.

Sgan. And I tell you in return, that I am resolved to marry; and that I shall not be silly in marrying the girl I am after.

[5] It must not be forgotten that *The Forced Marriage* was played in 1664; hence Geronimo counts to "sixty-four."

Ger. Oh! that is another thing. You never told me that.

Sgan. I like the girl; I love her with all my heart.

Ger. You love her with all your heart?

Sgan. Undoubtedly; and I have asked her of her father.

Ger. You have asked her?

Sgan. Yes. The marriage is to take place this evening; and I have plighted my troth.

Ger. Oh! marry then. I have not another word to say.

Sgan. Am I to abandon my design? Do you imagine, Geronimo, that I am no longer fit to think of a wife? Do not talk of what my age may be; but let us look at things as they are. Is there a man of thirty that looks fresher or more active than I? Have I not the use of my limbs as much as ever? Do I look as if I needed a carriage or chair to get about in? Are not all my teeth in excellent condition? [*Showing his teeth*] Do I not eat heartily four times a-day, and is any man's stomach stronger than mine? [*Coughing*] Hem, hem, hem! What say you?[6]

Ger. You are right; I was mistaken. Pray, marry; you cannot do better.

Sgan. I used to fight shy of it; but now I have strong reasons in its favour. Besides the pleasure I shall have in possessing a wife to fondle me, and to coddle me when I am tired; besides this pleasure, I consider that, by remaining as I am, I suffer the race of the Sganarelles to become extinct; whilst, by marrying, I may see myself reproduced, and shall have the joy of seeing children sprung from me, little images as like me as two peas, who will be always playing about the house, calling me their papa when I come back from town, and talking nonsense to me in the pleasantest manner possible. Oh, I can fancy I am already

[6] See Appendix, Note B.

in the midst of them; and that I see half-a-dozen round about me.[7]

Ger. Nothing could be nicer than that; and I advise you to marry as quickly as possible.

Sgan. Seriously? You advise it?

Ger. Assuredly. You could not do better.

Sgan. I am indeed delighted that you give me this advice as a true friend.

Ger. And pray, who is the lady whom you are going to marry?

Sgan. Dorimène.

Ger. Young Dorimène, that gay, well-dressed girl?

Sgan. Yes.

Ger. Alcantor's daughter?

Sgan. The very same.

Ger. And the sister of Alcidas, who presumes to carry a sword?

Sgan. That is the girl.

Ger. My goodness!

Sgan. What have you to say to it?

Ger. A good match. Make haste and get married.

Sgan. Have I not made an excellent choice?

Ger. No doubt of it. Ah, you will be well matched! Lose no time about it.

Sgan. I am overjoyed to hear you say so. I thank you for your advice, and I invite you to come to-night to my wedding.

Ger. I shall be sure to be there; I shall come masked, the better to honour the occasion.[8]

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[7] Molière has evidently been influenced in writing this scene by the ninth chapter of the third book of Rabelais' *Pantagruel*, and by a passage from a Sermon on Widowhood by Jean Raulin, in the *Itinerarium Paradisi*, Paris, 1524, which has been elegantly rendered, under the name of Fredegonde, in *Bon Gaultier's Ballads*.

[8] *The Forced Marriage* was originally a Comedy-ballet, and most likely

Sgan. Good day.

Ger. [*Aside*] Young Dorimène, Alcantor's daughter, to Sganarelle, who is only fifty-three.[9] Oh! what a fine match! what a fine match![10] [*He repeats this over and over again, as he goes away.*]

SCENE III.

SGANARELLE, *alone.*

This marriage ought to be a happy one; for it pleases every one. All laugh to whom I mention it. I declare I am the happiest of men!

SCENE IV.

DORIMÈNE, SGANARELLE.[11]

Dor. [*Speaking to a page, who holds up her train*] Mind, youngster, hold up my train properly, and do not be playing your tricks.

Sgan. [*Aside, seeing Dorimène*] Here comes my mistress. Ah, how pleasing she is! What an air! what a figure! Who could see her without wishing to marry her? [*Going up to her*] Where are you going, pretty darling, my dear wife that is to be?

Dor. I am going to make a few purchases.

Sgan. Well, my dear, both of us are going to be happy now. You will no longer have a right to refuse me anything; and I can do with you just as I please, without any

Geronimo said "he should come masked" to announce a masquerade of young people in honour of the wedding of Sganarelle, but possibly Molière left it afterwards with an ironical meaning, as if Geronimo wanted to hide his laughter at Sganarelle's ridiculous marriage.

[9] On page 335 Geronimo says, "Sganarelle, you are in about your fifty-second or fifty-third year," giving to the latter "the benefit of a doubt;" but at the end of this scene he states frankly, when Sganarelle has left, that the latter is fifty-three years old.

[10] See Appendix, Note C. [11] See Appendix, Note D.

one being shocked. You will be mine from head to foot, and I shall be master of everything, of your little sparkling eyes, your little roguish nose, your tempting lips, your lovely ears, your pretty little chin, your little round breasts, your . . . In short, your whole person will be mine, to do what I like with, and I shall be entitled to fondle you as I choose. Are you not glad of this marriage, my lovely pet ?

Dor. Immensely glad, I assure you. For, indeed, my father's severity has kept me hitherto in the most grievous subjection. I have been raging, I do not know how long, at the scanty liberty he allows me ; I have wished a hundred times that he would get me a husband, so that I might quickly escape from the durance in which I have been kept by him, and be able to do as I pleased. Thank Heaven, you luckily came in the way ; I mean henceforth to give myself up to pleasure, and make up finely for the time I have lost. As you are a well-bred man, and know the world, I think we shall get on wonderfully well together, and that you will not be one of those bothering husbands who wish their wives to live like owls.[12] I confess that would not suit me ! Solitude drives me mad. I like gambling, visiting, assemblies, entertainments, promenades ; in fact, all kinds of pleasure. You must be overjoyed to have a wife like me. We shall never have a difference ; I shall not constrain your actions, and I hope that you will not constrain mine. For my part, I think we ought to be mutually complaisant, and not be married only to annoy each other. In a word, we shall live, when we get married, like two people who know the world. No jealous suspicions shall trouble our heads ; it will suffice for you to be assured of my fidelity, as I shall

[12] The original has *loup-garou*, were-wolf, a warlock, who, in the form of a wolf, roamed about devouring men, and whose hide was said to be bullet-proof. It is curious that the French and Germans have a wolf to frighten timorous people, and the English a bug-bear.

be persuaded of yours. But what is the matter? A change has come over you.[13]

Sgan. I am taken with a sudden pain in my head.[14]

Dor. That is a malady which attacks many people in these days; but our marriage will remove all that. Good-bye. I long to have a proper dress, that I may quickly throw these rags aside. I am going now to finish the purchase of all the things which I want; and I shall send in the bills to you.[15]

SCENE V.

GERONIMO, SGANARELLE.

Ger. Ah! Sganarelle, I am glad to find you here. I have met with a goldsmith who, having heard that you were in search of a handsome diamond ring to make a present to your bride, entreated me to recommend him to you, and to tell you that he has one to sell, the finest in the world.

Sgan. God bless me! there is no hurry for that.

Ger. How? What does that mean? Where is the ardour you displayed just now?

Sgan. Within the last few moments, I have had some slight scruples as to marriage. Before going farther I wish to sift this matter to the bottom, and to have interpreted to me a dream which I had last night, and which just recurred to me.[16] You know that dreams are like mirrors, which sometimes show all that is to happen to us. I dreamt I was in a ship, on a rough sea, and that . . .

Ger. Sganarelle, I have a little business on hand, which will not let me stay to hear you. I do not understand dreams; and, as to arguments upon marriage, you have for

[13] See Appendix, Note E.

[14] See Appendix, Note F.

[15] See Appendix, Note G.

[16] This is also an imitation of Rabelais' *Panurge*, Book III., Chapters 13 and 14.

neighbours a couple of scholars, of philosophers, who are just the men to tell you all that can be said on the subject. As they belong to different sects, you can compare their several opinions upon it. For my part, I adhere to what I said just now, and am your servant.

Sgan. [*Alone*] He is right. I must consult these men in my present uncertainty.

SCENE VI.

PANCRACE, SGANARELLE.[17]

Pan. [*Speaking to somebody within, and not seeing Sganarelle*] Go, you are an impertinent fellow, my friend, a man ignorant of all method and order, who ought to be expelled the Republic of letters.

Sgan. Ah! capital, here is one of them in the nick of time.

Pan. [*As before, and not seeing Sganarelle*] Yes, I shall maintain it on strong grounds, I will prove it you out of Aristotle, the philosopher of philosophers, that you are *ignorans, ignorantissimus, ignorantificans,* and *ignorantificatus,* in all imaginable cases and moods.

Sgan. He has fallen out with somebody. [*To Pancrace*] Sir!

Pan. [*As before, and not seeing Sganarelle*] You presume to argue, and do not know the very elements of reasoning.

Sgan. His passion prevents his seeing me. [*To Pancrace*] Sir!

Pan. [*As before, and not seeing Sganarelle*] It is a proposition condemned in all the regions of philosophy.

Sgan. [*Aside*] He must have been mightily vexed. [*To Pancrace*] I say . . .

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[17] See Appendix, Note H.

Pan. [*As before, and not seeing Sganarelle*] *Toto cœlo, tota via aberras.*[18]

Sgan. I kiss your hands, Master Doctor!

Pan. At your service.

Sgan. May I . . .

Pan. [*Turning round again*] Do you know what you have perpetrated? A syllogism *in Balordo!*[19]

Sgan. I . . .

Pan. [*As before*] The major is foolish, the minor trivial, and the conclusion ridiculous.

Sgan. I . . . .

Pan. [*As before*] I would rather die than admit what you say; and I shall maintain my opinion to the last drop of my ink.

Sgan. May I . . .

Pan. [*As before*] Yes, I shall defend this proposition *pugnis et calcibus, unguibus et rostro.*[20]

Sgan. Mr Aristotle, may I ask what has put you in such a rage?

Pan. The best possible reason.

Sgan. But what?

Pan. An ignoramus dared to maintain an erroneous proposition, a frightful, terrible, execrable proposition.

Sgan. May I ask what it is?

Pan. Ah, Mr Sganarelle, everything nowadays is subverted, and the world has fallen into general corruption. A horrible licence reigns everywhere; and the magistrates,

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[18] The literal translation is: "You err the whole extent of Heaven, the whole length of the road;" something like the familiar "You are as wrong as you can be."

[19] Pancrace makes here a scholastic joke. In Molière's time logic used a great many syllogisms, which were called by barbarous names, such as, *Barbara, Celarent, Darii, Ferio,* &c., but the doctor invents a syllogism in *Balordo,* because *balourd* is the French for "a noodle."

[20] With fists and feet, with nails and beak.

who are appointed to maintain order in the state, ought to die of shame, to suffer a scandal so intolerable as this which I shall reveal to you.[21]

Sgan. What is it then ?

Pan. Is it not a horrible thing, a thing crying for the vengeance of Heaven, to allow anyone to say in public "the form of a hat ?"

Sgan. How ?

Pan. I maintain that we ought to say "the figure of a hat," and not "the form;" forasmuch as there is this difference between the form and the figure, that the form is the external disposition of animate bodies, and the figure is the external disposition of inanimate bodies ; and since the hat is an inanimate body, we ought to say "the figure of a hat," and not "the form." [*Turning again to the side by which he entered*] Yes, ignoramus that you are, that is the manner in which you ought to express yourself, and these are Aristotle's own terms in his chapter on *Qualities*.

Sgan. [*Aside*] I thought we were all undone. [*To Panerace*] Master Doctor, think no more of this. I . . .

Pan. I am in such a rage, that I do not know what I am doing.

Sgan. Leave the form and the hat in peace. I have something to tell you. I . . .

Pan. Impertinent fellow ![22]

Sgan. Pray, be quiet. I .

Pan. Ignoramus !

Sgan. Good Heavens ! I

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[21] This is a hit at the University of Paris, who prosecuted those who differed in opinion from it, and invoked the arms of the magistrates to punish those who were opposed to it. See Introductory Notice, page 328.

[22] The original has *impertinent fieffé*, a relic of the feudal times, when a noble who possessed a fief was called *un noble fieffé*, or one who possessed all advantages—namely, title and property ; hence *un impertinent fieffé* is a fellow who possesses all the qualifications of impertinence.

Pan. To dare to maintain such a proposition!

Sgan. He is wrong. I . . .

Pan. A proposition condemned by Aristotle.

Sgan. It is true. I . . .

Pan. In so many words!

Sgan. You are right. [*Going round to the side by which Pancrace entered*] Yes, you are a fool, an impudent fellow, to pretend to argue with a Doctor who can read and write. Now, that is done with. I beg you to listen to me. I am come to consult you on an affair which perplexes me. I intend to take a wife, to keep me company at home. The lady is handsome and well-made; she charms me greatly, and is delighted to marry me; her father has given her to me; but I am rather afraid of, you know what—the disgrace for which no one pities a man; I wish much to beg of you, as a philosopher, to give me your opinion. Eh? What is your advice in the matter?

Pan. Rather than admit that we ought to say "the form of a hat," I would admit that *datur vacuum in rerum natura*,[23] and that I am a mere ass.

Sgan. [*Aside*] Plague take the man. [*To Pancrace*] Why, Master Doctor, do hear one for a moment. I have been talking to you for an hour, and you do not reply to what is said to you.

Pan. I ask your pardon. A just wrath engrosses my mind.

Sgan. Well, let it pass; and be at the pains to listen to me.

Pan. I will. What do you wish to say to me?

Sgan. I wish to speak to you of something.

Pan. And what tongue would you use with me?

Sgan. What tongue?

[23] Literally, "A vacuum exists in the things of nature." The peripatetic school denied the existence of a vacuum.

Pan. Ay.

Sgan. Zounds! the tongue I have in my mouth. I do not think I shall go and borrow my neighbour's.

Pan. I ask you, what idiom, what language?

Sgan. Oh! that is another thing.

Pan. Do you wish to speak to me in Italian?

Sgan. No.

Pan. Spanish?

Sgan. No.

Pan. German?

Sgan. No.

Pan. English?

Sgan. No.

Pan. Latin?

Sgan. No.

Pan. Greek?

Sgan. No.

Pan. Hebrew?

Sgan. No.

Pan. Syriac?

Sgan. No.

Pan. Turkish?

Sgan. No.

Pan. Arabic?

Sgan. No, no! French, French, French![24]

Pan. Ah, French!

Sgan. Quite so.

Pan. Then go to the other side; for this ear is set apart for the learned and foreign languages, and the other is for the vulgar and mother tongue.

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[24] In the ninth chapter of the second book of Rabelais' *Pantagruel*, "How Pantagruel found Panurge," whom he loved all his life-time, the first addresses the latter also in a dozen different languages, before speaking to him.

Sgan. [*Aside*] One must employ many ceremonies with this sort of people.

Pan. What do you desire?

Sgan. To consult you in a little difficulty.

Pan. Ah! a difficulty in philosophy, no doubt.

Sgan. Pardon me. I . . . . .

Pan. You would know perhaps if substance and accident be synonymous terms, or equivocal in respect of entity?

Sgan. Not at all. I . . .

Pan. If logic be an art or a science?

Sgan. It is not that. I . . .

Pan. If its object be the three operations of the mind, or the third only?

Sgan. No. I . . .

Pan. If there be ten categories, or only one?

Sgan. Not so. I . . .

Pan. If the conclusion be of the essence of a syllogism?

Sgan. No-o! I—

Pan. If the essence of good be placed in appetibility or incongruity?

Sgan. No. I—

Pan. If good be reciprocal with finality?

Sgan. Oh, no! I—

Pan. Whether finality can affect us by its real, or by its intentional being?

Sgan. No, no, no, no, no! By all the devils, no!

Pan. Unfold then your thought; for I cannot divine it.

Sgan. That is just what I wish to do; but you must listen to me. The business I have to mention to you is that I have a mind to marry a girl who is young and handsome. I love her very much, and I have asked her of her father; but I fear . . .

Pan. [*Not listening to Sganarelle*] Speech has been given

to man to express his thoughts ;[25] and just as thoughts are the representations of things, so our words are the representations of our thoughts. [*Sganarelle impatiently stops the Doctor's mouth with his hand; but the latter continues to speak as soon as Sganarelle withdraws his hand. This is repeated several times.*] But these representations differ from other representations, inasmuch as these other representations are distinguished everywhere by their originals, whilst speech includes its original in itself; being nothing but thought explained by an external sign ; whence it follows that they who think well are also they who speak the best. Explain to me then your thoughts by words, which are the most intelligible of all signs.

Sgan. [*Pushing the Doctor into his house, and pulling the door to prevent his coming out*] Plague take the man !

Pan. [*Within*] Yes, speech is *animi index et speculum,* that is, the interpreter of the heart, the image of the soul. [*He gets up to the window and continues*] It is a mirror which plainly reproduces for us the innermost secrets of our individualisms. Since, then, you have the faculty of reasoning, and also of speaking, why do you not make use of speech in order to make me understand your thoughts ?

Sgan. That is just what I wish to do ; but you will not listen to me.

Pan. I listen to you ; speak.

Sgan. I say then, Doctor, that .

Pan. But above all, be brief.

Sgan. I will.

Pan. Avoid prolixity.

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[25] A formula employed by several of Molière's successors. The reverse has also been maintained :—" Speech was given to man to disguise his thoughts."

Sgan. Oh! Sir . . .

Pan. Contract your discourse into a laconic apophthegm.

Sgan. I . . .

Pan. No diffuseness nor circumlocution. [*Sganarelle, in his vexation at being unable to speak, picks up stones to throw at the Doctor's head.*] Eh, what? Are you flying into a passion instead of explaining yourself? Go along, you are more impertinent than the fellow who would have it that one ought to say "the form of a hat;" and I will prove to you upon all occasions, by clear and convincing reasons, and by arguments in *Barbara*, that you are not, and never will be, aught but an animal, and that I am, and ever shall be, Doctor Pancrace, *in utroque jure.*

Sgan. What an eternal gabbler!

Pan. [*Coming down*] A man of letters, a man of learning.[26]

Sgan. What, more?

Pan. A man of sufficiency, a man of capacity. [*Going away.*] A man supreme in all the sciences, natural, moral, and political. [*Returning*] A learned, most learned man, *per omnes modos et casus.* [*Going away*] A man who possesses, in the superlative degree, a knowledge of fables, mythologies, and histories—[*returning*]—grammar, poetry, rhetoric, dialectics, and sophistry—[*going away*]—mathematics, arithmetic, optics, oncirocritics, physics and metaphysics—[*returning*]—cosmometry, geometry, architecture, the speculory and speculatory arts—[*going away*]—medicine, astronomy, astrology, physiognomy, metoposcopy, cheiromancy, geomancy, etc.[27]

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[26] See Appendix, Note I.

[27] Instead of *metaphysics* the original has again *mathematics*, which appears an error. *Oneirocritics* is the interpretation of dreams; *the speculory art* showed in a mirror the image of absent persons; *the speculatory art* interpreted the future through observing thunder, lightning, and

SCENE VII.

SGANARELLE, *alone.*

The devil take these scholars, who will never listen to people! I was rightly informed that his master, Aristotle, was nothing but a talker. I must go and find the other one. Perhaps he may be more composed and reasonable. Soho, there!

SCENE VIII.

MARPHURIUS, SGANARELLE.

Mar. What do you want with me, Mr Sganarelle?

Sgan. Doctor, I have need of your advice in a little matter of business, and that is why I have come to you. [*Aside*] Ah! this is all right. This gentleman lets people speak.

Mar. Mr Sganarelle, pray change this mode of speaking. Our philosophy enjoins us not to enunciate a positive proposition, but to speak of everything dubiously, and always to suspend our judgment. For this reason, you should not say, I am come, but it seems that I am come.

Sgan. Seems?

Mar. Yes.

Sgan. Upon my word! no doubt it seems, because it is so.

Mar. That does not follow: it might seem, and yet not be true.

Sgan. How? Is it not true that I am come?

Mar. That is questionable; and we must doubt everything.

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meteors; *metoposcopy* was the art of predicting what would happen by studying the countenance; *cheiromancy* is divination by looking at the lines in the hand; and *geomancy*, by observing the lines, or crevices and undulations of the ground.

Sgan. What! I am not here? and you are not speaking to me?

Mar. It appears to me that you are there, and it seems that I am speaking to you; but it is not certain that it is so.

Sgan. Eh! what the deuce! You are joking. Here I am, and there you are, plainly enough; and there is no "seems" in all that. Let us dispense with these quirks and quibbles, I beg, and talk of my business. I am come to tell you that I wish to marry.

Mar. I know nothing of this.

Sgan. I tell it you.

Mar. It may be so.

Sgan. The girl whom I intend to marry is very young and very lovely.

Mar. It is not impossible.

Sgan. Shall I do well or ill to marry her?

Mar. The one or the other.

Sgan. [*Aside*] Oh, dear! here is another tune. I ask you, if I shall do well to marry the girl I speak of?

Mar. As it may chance.

Sgan. Shall I do ill?

Mar. Just as it happens.

Sgan. Pray, answer me properly.

Mar. That is my intention.

Sgan. I have a great liking for the girl.

Mar. That may be.

Sgan. The father has given his consent.

Mar. He may have done so.

Sgan. But if I marry her, I fear to be made a cuckold.

Mar. The thing is feasible.

Sgan. What do you think of it?

Mar. There is no impossibility in it.

Sgan. But what would you do, if you were in my place?

Mar. I do not know.

Sgan. What do you advise me to do?

Mar. Whatever you please.

Sgan. I shall go mad!

Mar. I wash my hands of it.

Sgan. Devil take the dreamer!

Mar. As it may be.[28]

Sgan. [*Aside*] Plague take the rascal![29] I'll make you change your tune, mad hang-dog of a philosopher!

[*Beats him.*

Mar. Oh, oh, oh!

Sgan. There is something for your nonsense! And now I am satisfied!

Mar. How! What insolence is this! To outrage me in this manner! To have the audacity to beat a philosopher like me!

Sgan. Pray, correct this manner of speaking. We are to doubt everything; and you ought not to say that I have beaten you, but that it seems I have beaten you.

Mar. Ugh! I shall go and complain to a magistrate[30] of this beating.

Sgan. I wash my hands of it.

Mar. I have the marks on my body.

Sgan. It may be so.

Mar. You know it was you who did it.

Sgan. It is not impossible.

Mar. I will get a summons against you.

Sgan. I know nothing about it.

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[28] This scene is an imitation of the thirty-sixth chapter of the third book of Rabelais' *Pantagruel*, where Panurge asks Trouillogan's advice if he should marry.

[29] See Appendix, Note J.

[30] The original has *commissaire du quartier*. See *The School for Husbands*, page 9, note 5.

Mar. And you will be convicted.

Sgan. As it may be.

Mar. Leave me alone for that.[31]

SCENE IX.

SGANARELLE, *alone.*

What now? One cannot get a word from that beastly man, and I am as wise at the end as at the beginning. What shall I do in this uncertainty as to the consequences of getting married? Never was a man more perplexed than I. Ah! here come the gipsies: they shall tell me my fortune.

SCENE X.

TWO GIPSIES, SGANARELLE.

The two Gipsies come in, with tabors, singing and dancing.

Sgan. They are very merry. I say, you good women, can you tell me my fortune?

1 *Gip.* Ay, my good sir, both of us here will tell it you.

2 *Gip.* Just give us your hand, and cross ours with a small bit of silver,[32] and we shall tell you something that shall be of service to you.

Sgan. Here: there are both my hands, with what you ask in them.

1 *Gip.* You have a good phiz, master—a good phiz.

2 *Gip.* Ay, a good phiz; the phiz of a man that will be something one of these days.

1 *Gip.* You will be married before long, good master, you will be married before long.

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31 See Appendix, Note K.

32 The original has *avec la croix dedans*, literally, with a cross in it; because formerly some coins had on one side a cross; hence also the French for playing pitch and toss, *jouer à croix ou pile*, and the expression, *loger le diable dans sa bourse*, literally, "to lodge the devil in one's purse," because there was no cross to drive him away.

2 *Gip.* You will wed a pretty wife, a pretty wife.

1 *Gip.* Ay, a wife that will be courted and loved by every one.

2 *Gip.* A wife that will make you many friends, good master, many friends.

1 *Gip.* A wife that will bring plenty to your house.

2 *Gip.* A wife that will gain you great repute.

1 *Gip.* You will be esteemed for her sake, good master; you will be esteemed for her sake.

Sgan. That is well. But just tell me, is there fear of my being a cuckold?

2 *Gip.* Cuckold!

Sgan. Ay!

1 *Gip.* Cuckold!

Sgan. Ay; is there fear of my being cuckolded? [*The Gipsies sing and dance*] What the devil! that is no answer. Come here. I ask you whether I shall be a cuckold.

2 *Gip.* A cuckold! You?

Sgan. Ay, shall I be a cuckold?

1 *Gip.* You a cuckold!

Sgan. Yes; shall I, or not?

[*The Gipsies go off, singing and dancing.*

SCENE XI.

SGANARELLE, *alone.*

Plague take the baggages for leaving me in this uncertainty! I must really know the upshot of my marriage; so I shall go and find that great magician of whom everybody is talking, and who, by his marvellous art, enables us to see all that we wish. Upon my word! I believe I have only to go to the magician, and he will show me all that I ask of him.

SCENE XII.

DORIMÈNE, LYCASTE, SGANARELLE [*out of sight, at the back of the stage*].

Lyc. What! lovely Dorimène, do you speak seriously?

Dor. Most seriously.

Lyc. You really mean to marry?

Dor. Really.

Lyc. And your wedding is to be this evening?

Dor. This evening.

Lyc. And you can forget, cruel maid, the love I feel for you, and the kind words you have spoken to me?

Dor. I? By no means. I shall always think the same of you; and this marriage need not trouble you. I am not marrying the man for love; it is only his wealth that makes me resolve to accept him. I have no fortune; no more have you; and you know that, without fortune, it goes hard with us in the world. At whatever cost, therefore, we must try to get it. I have jumped at this opportunity of making myself comfortable; I have done it in the hope of being soon delivered from the old fool that I am marrying. He will shortly die; he has not more than six months to live. I guarantee that he is dead in the time I say; I shall not long have to pray Heaven for the happy state of widowhood. [*Seeing Sganarelle*] Ah, we were talking of you, and saying much in your praise too.

Lyc. Is that the gentleman . . .?

Dor. Yes, that is the gentleman who is going to marry me.

Lyc. Allow me, sir, to congratulate you on your marriage, and at the same time to offer you my most humble services. Let me tell you that the lady, whom you are marrying, possesses great merits; as for you, Miss Dorimène, I congratulate you also on the happy choice you have made.

You could not have found a better, and this gentleman has all the appearance of making a very good husband. Yes, sir, I should be delighted to strike up a friendship with you, and to arrange a slight interchange of visits and entertainments.

Dor. You are doing us too much honour. But come, time presses, and we shall have plenty of opportunities to converse together.

SCENE XIII.

SGANARELLE, *alone.*

There, now I am fairly disgusted with my match; I think I shall not do amiss to go and get out of my engagement. It has cost me a little money; but I had better even lose that than run the risk of something worse. I shall try if I cannot be clever enough to get out of this scrape. Within there! [*He knocks at Alcantor's door.*

SCENE XIV.

ALCANTOR, SGANARELLE.

Al. Ah, son-in-law, you are welcome.

Sgan. Sir, my duty to you.

Al. You come to conclude the marriage?

Sgan. Excuse me.

Al. I promise you that I am as impatient as yourself.

Sgan. I come here for another purpose.

Al. I have given the necessary orders for the entertainment.

Sgan. That is not what I am come about.

Al. The violins are engaged, the feast is bespoke, and my daughter is ready dressed to receive you.

Sgan. It is not that which has brought me.

Al. In short, you are about to have your wish; and nothing can delay your happiness.

Sgan. Good Lord, there is something else to think of.

Al. Come, son-in-law, will you walk in?

Sgan. I have just a word to say to you.

Al. Oh goodness, let us have no ceremony! Enter quickly, if you please.

Sgan. No, I tell you. I wish to speak to you first

Al. You have something to say to me?

Sgan. Yes.

Al. What is it, then?

Sgan. Mr Alcantor, it is true I asked your daughter in marriage, and you granted my request; but I find that I am rather old; I think that I am by no means a proper match for her.

Al. Pardon me. My daughter likes you as you are; and I am sure that she will live very happily with you.

Sgan. Nay. I am given to strange whims at times, and she would have too much to endure from my ill humour.

Al. My daughter is of a very mild and obliging disposition; you shall see that she will accommodate herself entirely to you.

Sgan. I have some bodily infirmities which might disgust her.

Al. That is nothing. A virtuous woman is never disgusted with her husband.

Sgan. Must I then speak plainly? I do not advise you to give her to me.

Al. Surely you are jesting? I would rather die than break my word.

Sgan. Oh dear, I absolve you from it, and . . . .

Al. By no means. I have promised her to you, and you shall have her, in spite of all who are running after her.

Sgan. [*Aside*] The devil I shall!

Al. Look here. I have a special respect and friend-

ship for you; and I would refuse my daughter to a Prince, to give her to you.

Sgan. Mr Alcantor, I am obliged for the honour you do me, but I declare to you that I will not marry.

Al. Not marry, you say?

Sgan. Yes, not marry.

Al. And why?

Sgan. Why? Because I feel I am not fit for marriage; and because I wish to be like my father, and all my ancestors, who never would marry.

Al. Hark ye. Every one to his liking; I am not the man to force anyone. You gave me your word that you would marry my daughter, and everything is prepared for the wedding; but since you wish to withdraw, I shall go and see what can be done in the matter; you shall hear from me presently.

SCENE XV.

SGANARELLE, *alone.*

Now he is more reasonable than I expected. I thought I should have much more trouble in getting off. Upon my word, when I think of it, I have done very prudently in withdrawing from this business. I was going to take a step of which I should perhaps have repented at leisure. But here comes the son, to bring me my answer.

SCENE XVI.

ALCIDAS, SGANARELLE.[33]

Alcid. [*In a mild and complaisant tone*] Sir, your most obedient servant.

Sgan. Sir, I am entirely yours.

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[33] See Appendix, Note L.

Alcid. My father has told me, sir, that you came to withdraw your promise to marry my sister.

Sgan. Yes, sir. It is with regret; but . . .

Alcid. Oh! sir, there is no harm in that.

Sgan. I am extremely sorry, I assure you, and I could wish . . .

Alcid. That is nothing, I tell you. [*Offers Sganarelle two swords*] Sir, have the goodness to choose one of these swords.

Sgan. One of these swords?

Alcid. Yes, if you please.

Sgan. For what?

Alcid. Sir, as you refuse to marry my sister, after giving your word, I think you will not take amiss the little compliment I have paid you.

Sgan. How?

Alcid. Other people would make more noise, and get into a rage with you; but we are the sort of people to take things quietly; and I have come to tell you very politely that we must, by your favour, cut each other's throats.

Sgan. That is a sorry compliment.

Alcid. Come, sir, I beg you will make your choice.

Sgan. I am your very humble servant, but I have no throat worth cutting. [*Aside*] Here is a scurvy style of speech!

Alcid. Sir, by your leave, it must be so.

Sgan. My dear sir, a truce, I beg, to this compliment.

Alcid. Let us be quick about it, sir. I have a little business on hand.

Sgan. I have no mind for this, I tell you.

Alcid. You will not fight?

Sgan. I will not, upon my soul.

Alcid. You mean it?

Sgan. I mean it.

Alcid. [*Giving him a few blows with his cane*] At least, sir, you cannot complain; you see that I do things by rule. You break your word with us, I wish to fight you, you refuse to fight, I cane you,—all that is according to form; and you are too much of a gentleman to find fault with my mode of acting.[34]

Sgan. [*Aside*] Here is a devil of a fellow!

Alcid. [*Again offering the swords*] Come, sir, do things like a gentleman, before I pull your ears.

Sgan. What! are you determined?

Alcid. Sir, I force no one; but you must either fight or marry my sister.

Sgan. Sir, I assure you, I cannot do either.

Alcid. Really?

Sgan. Really.

Alcid. By your leave then . . . [*Beats him again.*

Sgan. Oh, oh, oh!

Alcid. Sir, I infinitely regret to be obliged to treat you thus; but if you please I shall not stop until you have promised to marry my sister. [*Raises his cane.*

Sgan. Well then, I will marry, I will marry!

Alcid. My dear Sir, I am delighted that you have returned to your senses, and that things can go smoothly. For I swear that I esteem you more than any one in the world; and I should have been grieved if you had compelled me to maltreat you. I shall call my father, and let him know that everything is settled.

[*Goes and knocks at Alcantor's door.*[35]

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[34] See Appendix, Note M. [35] See Appendix, Note N.

SCENE XVII.

ALCANTOR, DORIMÈNE, ALCIDAS, SGANARELLE.

Alcid. Father, this gentleman is now pleased to listen to reason. He has determined to do things with a good grace, and you can give my sister to him.

Alcan. Sir, here is her hand; you have only to give her yours. Heaven be praised! I have got rid of her; it is for you henceforth to take charge of her character. Let us make merry, and celebrate this happy marriage.

APPENDIX.

A, Page 333.

David Garrick, in *The Irish Widow* (Act i., Scene 1), has given as follows the meeting between Whittle (Sganarelle) and Bates (Geronimo).

Whit. Ha! here he is—give me your hand.

Bat. I am glad to see you in such spirits, my old gentleman.

Whit. Not so old neither—no man ought to be called old, friend Bates, if he is in health, spirits, and—

Bat. In his senses—which I should rather doubt, as I never saw you half so frolicksome in my life.

Whit. Never too old to learn, friend; and if I don't make use of my philosophy now, I may wear it out in twenty years—I have been always banter'd as of too grave a cast—you know when I studied at Lincoln's-Inn, they used to call me Young Wisdom.

Bat. And if they should call you Old Folly, it will be a much worse name.

Whit. No young jackanapes dares to call me so, while I have this friend at my side. [*Touches his sword.*]

Bat. A hero too! what in the name of common sense is come to you, my friend?—high spirits, quick honour, a long sword, and a bag!—you want nothing but to be terribly in love, and then you may sally forth Knight of the Woeful Countenance. Ha! ha! ha!

Whit. Mr Bates—the ladies, who are the best judges of countenances, are not of your opinion; and unless you'll be a little serious, I must beg pardon for giving you this trouble, and I'll open my mind to some more attentive friend.

Bat. Well, come unlock then, you wild, handsome, vigorous young dog you—I will please you if I can.

Whit. I believe me you never saw me look better, Frank, did you?

Bat. O yes, rather better forty years ago.

Whit. What, when I was at Merchant Taylor's School?

Bat. At Lincoln's-Inn, Tom.

Whit. It can't be—I never disguise my age, and next February I shall be fifty-four.

Bat. Fifty-four! why I am sixty, and you always lick'd me at

school—though I believe I could do as much for you now, and ecod I believe you deserve it too.

Whit. I tell you I am in my fifty-fifth year.

Bat. O, you are—let me see—we were together at Cambridge, Anno Domini twenty-five, which is near fifty years ago—you came to the college, indeed, surprisingly young: and, what is more surprising, by this calculation you went to school before you was born—you was always a forward child.

Whit. I see there is no talking or consulting with you in this humour; and so, Mr Bates, when you are in temper to show less of your wit, and more of your friendship, I shall consult with you.

Bat. Fare you well, my old boy—young fellow, I mean—when you have done sowing your wild oats, and have been blistered into your right senses; when you have half kill'd yourself with being a beau, and return to your woollen caps, flannel waistcoats, worsted stockings, cork soles, and gallochies, I am at your service again. So bon jour to you, Monsieur Fifty-four, ha! ha!

B, Page 336.

The first and second scenes of Molière's *Forced Marriage* are thus rendered by Mrs Carroll (afterwards Mrs Centlivre) in *Love's Contrivance* (Act i., Scene 2). Sganarelle is called Sir Toby Doubtful and Geronimo Octavio.

Sir T. Do you hear, if any body brings me any Money, send for me to Mr Selfwill's House immediately; but if any wants Money, tell 'em I am not at home, nor shan't be all day. [*Enter Octavio.*]

Oct. A very prudent Order, faith,—Sir Toby, your Servant.

Sir T. Mr Octavio, I am heartily glad to see you; pray, how long have you been in England?

Oct. These six months, but not one in town; the last Bills you transmitted me to Cales brought me over. I was several times upon Change, but cou'd not have the good Fortune to meet with you: Come, shall we take a Bottle together.

Sir T. Another time, Sir, I shall be glad to crack a Bottle with you, but at present I have a little pressing Business upon my Hands, wherein I should be glad of a Friend's advice. Now I know you are a Man of Sense, and your Father was my particular Friend, and I have a very great Respect for you as his Son, and wou'd rather take your Advice than any Man's I know again; therefore we'll step into this House, and I'll tell you what 'tis.

Oct. Oh! Sir Toby, you do me too much Honour; I'll promise to give you the best Advice I am capable of. Allons; so ho the House there! [*Enter Drawer.*

Draw. You are welcome, gentlemen ; will you be pleased to walk into a Room ? [*Exeunt, and enter again in a Room with a Table and Wine.*

Sir T. Well, Mr Octavio, before I tell you what it is, I conjure you not to flatter me, but deal freely, and give your just thoughts of the Matter.

Oct. You may be certain I will.

Sir T. I think there can be nothing worse in a Friend, than not to speak his Mind freely.

Oct. You are in the right.

Sir-T. In this Age one finds but few Friends sincere.

Oct. That's true.

Sir T. Promise me, then.

Oct. I promise you.

Sir T. Swear by your Faith you will.

Oct. Upon the Faith of a Friend I will ; therefore, pray tell me your Business. [*Aside*] What the Devil can all this mean ?

Sir T. Why, then, it is this ; shall I do well to marry ?

Oct. [*Aside*] By the Injunction, I thought it was either Hanging or Marrying. Who, you ! Sir Toby ?

Sir T. Yes, myself, in proper Person ; what is your Advice upon that ?

Oct. I pray, before I give you my Opinion, tell me one thing.

Sir T. What 's that ?

Oct. What Age are you ?

Sir T. What Age ?

Oct. Ay.

Sir T. Faith, I don't know ; but I 'm very well.

Oct. Can you guess near what age ?

Sir T. No, I never think of that.

Oct. Hark ye, Sir, how old were you when my Father was at first acquainted with you ?

Sir T. Ha—how old ? why about twenty.

Oct. Very good ; and how long were you together at Rome ?

Sir T. Eight years.

Oct. How long did you live in France ?

Sir T. Seven years.

Oct. You were some time in Holland, too.

Sir T. Five years and a half.

Oct. And when did you come over again ?

Sir T. I came over in eighty.

Oct. So, from eighty to seven hundred and one is 21 years, I think ; and five years in Holland, and seven years in France, that is thirty-three, and eight years at Rome, that is forty-one, and twenty years you own at your first Acquaintance with my Father, which is just three-score and one, by your own Confession, and it may be a Year or two older.

Sir T. Who, I, Mr Octavio? No, no, it can't be, you have reckon'd wrong.

Oct. Nay, I have calculated just I 'll assure you; whereupon I shall speak freely like a Friend; and as you made me swear to do —— Marriage won't do your Work, that's a thing we young Men ought to think seriously on before we do it, but Men of your Age should never think on 't at all: If one would give the greatest Ill a Name 'tis Marriage. I know nothing worse, especially to an old Man; therefore if you'll take my Advice, don't think on 't. I shou'd think that Man ridiculous that wou'd keep open House for all Strollers, and yet is incapable of sharing the Diversion himself. No, no, my Friend, grey Hairs and a bridal Bed are ridiculous Companions.

Sir T. Look ye, Sir, I ask'd your Advice as a Friend, and not to be affronted.

Oct. And I gave it you as a Friend, Sir; I'm sure I design'd no Affront, Sir Toby.

Sir T. Sir, I say my Hair is not grey with Age; for I was as grey as I am now at twenty, and so was my Father before me.

Oct. Nay, Sir Toby, that may be, I protest I did not think any harm when I spoke; you bid me speak my mind freely, you know.

Sir T. I did so, but did not think you had been of this opinion; for I can assure you I shall marry, and the very woman I design, and I warrant she 'll like me ne'er the worse for my grey Hairs, as you call 'em.

Oct. Perhaps the Lady may suit your Years, Sir Toby; if so, you 'll do well to marry.

Sir T. My years—What do you mean, Mr Octavio? I think any Lady suits my years,—the Lady I design to marry is about twenty, and I love her.

Oct. You love her!

Sir T. And I have her Father's Consent.

Oct. You have her Father's Consent!

Sir T. Yes; and the match is concluded on, and is to be to-morrow.

Oct. Nay then marry a' God's Name; I shan't speak one Word more.

Sir T. Why, wou'd you have me fancy myself old, Sir, so long as I have the Vigour of a Man of thirty. Don't I walk upright? [*Walks*] Nay, can dance a Minuet with e'er a young Fellow of you all, la, la, lal, lara, lera, la. [*Skips and dances*] My Legs don't fail me, thank God. I have no need of a Coach nor Chair to carry me to my Mistress—And look you here, I have as good a Set of Teeth as e'er a Beau in Christendom [*Shews his Teeth*] I have a very good Appetite too, I can digest four Meals a day, and am as sound as a Roach, Boy. Hem, hem, hem. [*Coughs.*] Ha! what say you to these Symptoms, Friend? Mayn't I venture to marry, think ye?

Oct. By all means, I was mistaken.

Sir T. Sometimes I am of another mind; but when I think what a Pleasure it will be to possess a young beautiful Creature that will caress, and stroak, and fondle me when I am weary, and out of Humour.

Oct. [*Aside*] That will cuckold you when she is in Humour. [*Aside.*]

Sir T. Besides, when I die, the Name of the Doubtfulls is extinct in the Male Line; therefore I'm resolv'd to beget a Boy, that shall beget another Boy, and so bear up my Name to Posterity. Ah! What Pleasure it will be to see the little Creatures playing about one's knees, and to hear one tell me the Boy has my Nose, another my Eyes, the third my Mouth and Smile, ha, ha!

Oct. [*Aside*] While the Mother smiles, to think you had the least hand in the getting it.

Sir T. And then, when I come from Change, to have 'em run and meet one, and call Papa; 'tis surely the most agreeable Pleasure in the World, and I hope to get half a dozen of 'em ere I die yet, Boy.

Oct. [*Aside*] Father half a dozen, you mean, old Gentleman.

Sir T. What say'st thou then, ha—Boy?

Oct. Oh! Sir, I wou'd counsel you to marry with all the haste you can.

Sir T. Good—you counsel me!

Oct. You can't do better.

Sir T. I'm overjoy'd to think that your Opinion jumps with mine: I ever took you to be a Man of Sense—and you give this Counsel out of pure Friendship?

Oct. I do upon my word; for when a Man refuses to follow my Counsel, I think the best thing I can do, is to advise him to follow his own. But pray, Sir Toby, who is this Lady?

Sir T. Lucinda.

Oct. What, the great Beauty?

Sir T. Yes, Sir.

Oct. Daughter to Mr Selfwill?

Sir T. The same.

Oct. What do I hear?

Sir T. What do you say?

Oct. A very noble Match.

Sir T. Had I not Reason in my Choice?

Oct. Oh! without doubt—[*Aside*]—But I'm mistaken if you have her, old Gentleman.

Sir T. Well, I invite you to the throwing of the Stocking, Mr Octavio. Ha—you'll wish yourself in my Place, Boy.

Oct. . . . I'll not fail; Sir, your very humble Servant.

Sir T. Sir, your very humble Servant.

C, Page 338.

This scene of Sganarelle asking advice from Geronimo in Molière's *The Forced Marriage* (Act i., Scene 2) is imitated by Ravenscroft in *Scaramouch a Philosopher* (Act ii., Scene 1), but the names in his play are Spittzaferro and Plautino.

Spittzaferro. Ah, Signior Plautino, I meet you very luckily, I was just coming to find you.

Plautino. For what, Signior Spittzaferro?

Spitt. To ask your advice about a business I have in hand.

Plaut. I'm very glad I meet you, here we may discourse with freedom.

Spitt. Be cover'd, I beseech you, 'tis concerning a matter of great importance, but it is not good to proceed in matters of this nature without the counsel and advice of Friends.

Plaut. I take it as a particular honour, Signior Spittzaferro, that you make choice of me. Well Sir, acquaint me with the business.

Spitt. But first I desire you not to flatter me, but really and truly to tell me your thoughts.

Plaut. Well, since you desire it, I will.

Spitt. There's nothing I should sooner find fault with, than a friend that won't freely tell me his mind.

Plaut. You are in the right.

Spitt. In this Age 'tis very hard to find a sincere friend.

Plaut. Very true.

Spitt. Wherefore, Signior Plautino, give me your advice, with all the freedom imaginable.

Plaut. There's my Hand upon't.

Spitt. Swear to me.

Plaut. By our friendship, as I hope to live. Now, tell me, what is't?

Spitt. I wou'd know whether you think it convenient for me to marry or not?

Plaut. For you to marry?

Spitt. Yes, I myself in Person, what wou'd you counsel me?

Plaut. I tell you plainly, that 't will be very indiscreetly done of you to marry, for marriage is a thing that even young people ought to consider of before they do it, and if marriage at the best be counted the greatest of follies, what can be worse than to be guilty of this folly, at an Age when one shou'd be more discreet. In short, Sir, I tell you my opinion, I wou'd not counsel you to marry, and you'l be thought the indiscreetest man in the world, having liv'd free to these years, if you shou'd now thrust your neck into the yoak.

Spitt. And I tell you, Signior Plautino, that I'm resolv'd to marry, come what will, and that nobody will count me a fool for marrying the

gentlewoman I pretend to, when once they see what manner of person she is.

Plaut. Oh ! that alters the Case, you did not tell me that.

Spitt. She 's one that 's very pritty, and one that I love very well.

Plaut. You love her very well ?

Spitt. With all my heart, and I have her Father's consent.

Plaut. Oh, you have her Father's consent too ?

Spitt. Yes, and I have promis'd to be marri'd to morrow.

Plaut. O Marry, Marry, I have no more to say.

Spitt. I was formerly against marrying, but now I consider if I continue as I am, the race of the Spittzaferros will be at an end, and in marrying I shall live after I am dead, in my issue.

Plaut. Therefore you 'l do very well to marry.

Spitt. Yes, what a pleasure I shall take to see a Company of little Creatures, to whom I gave life and motion, and are so many small Figures of myself, there shall I see myself drawn to the life in little. O how these little images will be hopping and jumping about me, and calling me Papa, talking and prattling, and telling me a company of pritty little foolish tales. O the dear pritty little Poppets, what can be more delightful.

Plaut. Nothing in the world, therefore marry the first thing you do.

Spitt. Very good, you give me that Counsel.

Plaut. I counsel you, you can't do better.

Spitt. Truly I am very well pleased to find you counsel me so like a friend.

Plaut. But who is the Person you are to marry ?

Spitt. One Mistress Aurelia.

Plaut. What, the pritty young Mistriss Aurelia?

Spitt. Yes.

Plaut. She that is so modish and waggish ?

Spitt. Yes.

Plaut. Daughter to Signior Jeronimo ?

Spitt. The same.

Plaut. And Sister to young Alberto, that has a command in the Castle ?

Spitt. 'Tis she, but him I never saw yet, he 's in the Country.

Plaut. Mercy upon me ?

Spitt. What say you, Signior ?

Plaut. A very fit person for you, marry with all speed.

Spitt. Have I not made a good choice ?

Plaut. A rare one, ah, what a fine Wife will you have. Marry, Marry, Marry, Signior Spittzaferro.

Spitt. Your approbation pleases me extremely ; I give you many thanks for your good counsel, and invite you to my wedding to-morrow.

Plaut. I'll not fail to come. The young Aurelia, daughter to Signior Geronimo, marry'd to Signior Spittzaferro, that is not above fifty-

three years of Age; oh, what a match, what a fine match is this? [*Exit.*]

Spitt. This match must needs be very happy, for everybody is much pleas'd that hear's on 't. I have not told it to one but smil'd at my choice, as soon as I speak. I shall to-morrow be the happiest man in the world: O here comes my Mistress.

D, Page 338.

The fourth scene from Molière's *Forced Marriage* is thus rendered and amplified by David Garrick in *The Irish Widow* (end of first act). Dorimène is there called Widow Brady, who assumes for the nonce flaunting airs and a strong Irish brogue, in order to disgust Mr Whittle (Sganarelle).

Enter WIDOW, *followed by* NEPHEW, THREE FOOTMEN *and* A BLACK BOY.

Widow. Don't bother me, young man, with your darts, your cupids, and your pangs . . . Your servant, Mr Whittol; I wish you would spake to your nephew not to be whining and dangling after me all day in his green coat like a parrot. . . . Are you now talking of my brogue? It is always the most fullest when the wind is aesterly; it has the same effect upon me as upon stammering people—they can't spake for their impediment, and my tongue is fix'd so loose in my mouth, I can't stop it for the life of me. . . . When the wind changes I have no brogue at all, at all. But come, Mr Whittol, don't let us be vulgar and talk of our poor relations; it is impossible to be in this metropolis of London, and have any thought but of operas, plays, masquerades, and pantaons, to keep up one's spirits in the winter; and Ranelagh, Vauxhall, and Marybone fireworks, to cool and refresh one in the summer—La! la! la! [*Sings*] . . . Are you low-spirited, my dare Mr Whittol? When you were at Scarborough, and winning my affections, you were all mirth and gaiety; and now you have won me, you are as thoughtful about it as if we had been married some time.

Whittle. Indeed, Madam, I can't but say I am a little thoughtful—we take it by turns; you were very sorrowful for the loss of your husband, and that you could dry up your tears so soon naturally makes me a little thoughtful.

Wid. Indeed, I could dry up my tears for a dozen husbands when I was sure of having a tirteenth like Mr Whittol; that 's very natural sure, both in England and Dublin too. . . . My mantua-maker is waiting for me to choose my clothes, in which I shall forget the sorrows of Mrs Brady in the joys of Mrs Whittol. Though I have no fortune myself, I shall bring a tolerable one to you, in debts, Mr Whittol; and which I will pay you tinfold in tinderness: Your deep purse, and my open heart, will make us the envy of the little grate ones, and the grate

little ones ; the people of quality with no souls, and grate souls with no cash at all. I hope you 'll meet me at the pantaon this evening. Lady Rantiton, and her daughter Miss Nettledown, and Nancy Tittup, with half a dozen *Maccaroonies* and two *Savoury Vivers*,[1] are to take me there ; and we propose a great deal of chat and merriment, and dancing all night, and all other kinds of recreations. I am quite another kind of a crator, now I am a bird in the fields, I can junket about a week together : I have a fine constitution, and am never molested with your nasty vapours. Are you ever troubled with vapours, Mr Whittol ?

Whit. A little now and then, Madam.

Wid. I 'll rattle 'em away like smoke ! there are no vapours where I come. I hate your dumps, and your nerves, and your megrims ; and I had much rather break your rest with a little racketting, than let any thing get into your head that should not be there Mr Whittol.

Whit. I will take care that nothing shall be in my head, but what ought to be there : what a deliverance. [*Aside.*]

E, Page 340.

The fourth scene from Molière's *Forced Marriage* is thus imitated by Ravenscroft in *Scaramouch a Philosopher* ; Dorimène is called Aurelia.

Enter AURELIA.

Spittzaferro. Ah ! how pritty, what an Air, how delicately shap'd and what a stature ! Can any man see her and not have a mind to her ? Whether art thou going, my little Poppet, my dear Wife that is to be if thy Husband that must be ?

Aurelia. I'm going about a little business.

Spitt. Euh—good, my little Mopsie, the hour is coming that we two must make one another happy. I can do with you what e'er I please, without any Body's saying why do you so ? or is it well done ? you will be mine all over from head to foot, I shall then be your right owner, and Master of you all over, of your pretty waggish Eyes, of that pretty little Roguish Nose, of those Cherry, Cherry lips, of those little, little fritter Ears, of those pretty blub-cheeks, of that dimpl'd dimpl'd Chin

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[1] *Maccaroni* was, in Garrick's time, the name for a fop, a fribble, a man who dressed fantastically. In *The New Foundling Hospital for Wit*, London, 1786, vol. i., there is a serio-burlesque Canto, by the Right Hon. Temple Luttrell, in which the following description occurs:—

Sable prig on spindle'shanks,
Burlesquing manhood (like a very ape
Which grinns to shew its teeth, and wears the shape ;)
Nor fish, nor flesh, a creature dull and droney,
Of doubtful sex, and call'd a Maccaroni.

Savoury Vivers is, I imagine, Widow Brady's way of pronouncing men who possess *savoir vivre !*

. . . of your soft, white Skin . . . In fine, every part and particle of you will be solely and wholly at my disposal; and I shall be the like to you, to be stroak'd and kiss'd, and do what e're you please with. Are you not glad of this Marriage, my little Wanton?

Aur. Most extremely glad, I'll assure you: For to say truth, my Father's severity has kept me in a most intollerable subjection, I have been almost mad for a little more liberty, and especially e're since he was sick. He has kept me so mew'd up in his warm Chamber, that I have wanted room to breath in. Were it not for you, that I must go abroad to buy things for our Wedding, I shou'd never have stirr'd from him . . . Now I'll be preparing to lead a pleasanter life, to take my full swing of pleasure, to make amends for what I have lost . . .

Spitt. Eumh!

Aur. Now, Sir, you being a very brave person, well bred and one that understands what it is to live, I believe that we shall do well together; and that you will not be one of those troublesome Husbands that wou'd have their Wives live sneaking and mew'd up; 't is a thing that does not at all agree with me, I shou'd never away with 't in a Husband; I can't endure a dull solitary life, 't is directly against my humour; I'm all Air and Mirth; I like to go where I please and do what I list . . .

Spitt. Eumh!

Aur. I love Visiting, Plays, Balls, Masquerades and good Company: I'm for good Clothes, —— a fine Coach! and handsome Liveries, and appearing amongst the best, as well drest, and as rich as any of 'em.

Spitt. Eumh! yes, yes.

Aur. In fine I'm resolved to make my life as pleasant as I can; and I know you'l think yourself happy to have a Wife of my humour.

Spitt. Eumh; —— yes, yes.

Aur. We'l never be meddling nor thwarting one another, I'll not concern myself at what you do; As I hope, on the other side, you'l not be contradicting or telling me what I shall do.

Spitt. Eumh: no, no.

Aur. As for my part, I think there ought to be a mutual compliance and that people ought not to marry to be troublesome to one another. In fine, when we are married we'l live like two that understands one anothers humour; no jealousy nor suspitions shall trouble your head, but it shall be sufficient that you have an assurance of my fidelity; as I shall have a good opinion of yours. But what troubles you? I perceive your countenance much chang'd on the sudden.

Spitt. Some splenatick vapours that rise and dizzy my brain.

Aur. 'Tis a distemper that abundance are troubled with. But our Marriage will take away all that. Adieu, Signior Spittzaferro, my dear Husband . . . that must be, of your wife that is to be. I am in a little haste at present, because I have not Clothes and things about me as I

wou'd have; I'm just going to buy me what things I want, you shall see how fine I'l be to-morrow[2] . . . Adieu, Signior Spittzaferro.

F, Page 340.

Mrs Carroll (Centlivre) has amplified this scene in *Love Contrivance* (Act iv., Scene 1). Dorimène is called in the English play Lucinda, her cousin, which does not exist in Molière's farce, Belliza.

Sir Toby. Well, my dear, we shall be very happy, you shall never refuse me any thing, and I'll do just what I please with you . . . Ha, my girl, does not this please you? ha! . . .

Lucinda. O! extremely, Sir Toby; for my Father's rigid severity has made me almost weary of my Life, I am stark mad for my Liberty . . . now I'll prepare for Diversion and retrieve the Time I've lost; you must promise me one thing, Sir Toby.

Sir T. What's that, Madame?

Luc. O, let me have a House, or very good Lodgings about St James's.

Sir T. About St James's?

Belliza. Oh! by all Means, Sir Toby, all People of Breeding, and Fashion, live at that End of the Town.

Luc. Especially the Company that I shall most covet.

Sir T. But St James's is quite out of my Way of Business; for that lies at the Exchange you know.

Bell. Better still, Sir Toby, for you may keep Lodgings in the City, and visit your Wife every Saturday Night, and stay till Monday, true Citizen like, you know . . . You look like a very gallant Gentleman, Sir Toby . . .

Luc. Ay, that knows how a Woman shou'd live; I'm certain you are not one of those ill-natured Husbands, who expect to keep their Wives like Melons under Glasses; I believe we shall agree the best in the World.

Sir T. [*Aside*] Asunder I believe it must be then.

Bell. [*Aside*] She'll distract the old Fellow presently —— And then, Sir Toby, you must alter your Livery, and give a lac'd one, for grey turned up with blue looks so like a Country Squire. Ha, ha, ha!

Luc. One thing more I had like to have forgot, I must have a French Chariot positively; for I would not give a farthing for a Chariot, if it ben't a French one.

Sir T. French! egad I wou'd not have a Nail about my Coach that's

[2] Ravenscroft misses here one of the best points in Moliere's play. Doriméne does not say in the French comedy "I am going to buy me what things I want, you shall see how fine I'll be to-morrow," but, "I am going now to finish the purchase of all the things I want, and I shall send in the bills to you."

French, for the Wealth of the East-India Company. French Chariot! say ye? Zouns, Madam, do you take me for a Jacobite? ha!

Bell. [*Aside*] Oh Lord! he 'll beat us by and by. No, no, Sir Toby, Gentlemen may follow the French Fashions, nay, sup with a Frenchman, yet be no Jacobite.

Sir T. I say 't is a lie, and I 'll keep no French Chariot.

Luc. You 'll at least keep six Horses, Sir Toby, for I wou'd not make a Tour in Hyde-Park with less for the World; for methinks a Pair looks like a Hackney.

Sir T. [*Aside*] Zouns! this Woman will undo me.

Luc. For my Part I hate Solitude, Churches, and Prayers.

Bell. So do I directly; for except St James's Church one scarce sees a well drest Man, or ever receives a Bow from any thing above one's Mercer.

Sir T. Why what a World of Religion our Ladies have; why do you go to Church to pay and receive Bows, pray?

Bell. Not absolutely on purpose, Sir Toby; but she that has no Reverence from a Crowd, is look'd upon as an obscure Person, than which there cannot be a greater Affront; for the Pleasure of living now-a-days, is to be known and talk'd of.

Sir T. [*Aside*] And I 'm mistaken if you 'll not give Cause enough for Talk.

Luc. For my part I love the Park, Plays—Oh Heavens! What ails you Sir? Your Countenance is changed.

Sir T. 'T is only Vapours——my Head is giddy a little.

Bell. Ha, ha, ha!

Luc. Oh! 't is a Disease that afflicts Abundance of People;—but our Marriage, I hope, will dissipate that. I 'll fetch you some cold Water, Sir Toby.

Sir T. No, no, it will off again——[*Aside*] Mercy upon me, what a judgment have I escap'd.

G, Page 340.

In Molière's *Forced Marriage* (Scene iv.), it is Dorimène, the betrothed of Sganarelle, who tells him the life she intends to lead after marriage; in Shadwell's *Sullen Lovers*, it is Roger, Stanford's man, who tells (Act v.) the Country Gentleman what Emilia, his bride, is going to do.

Roger. Now we are alone, Sir, I am oblig'd to tell you, I am sorry to see one, whom I so much honour'd, so ill us'd.

Country Gentleman. Pish! it 's no matter, man. . . .

Rog. I mean something concerns your Worship nearer.

C.-Gent. Nearer! what can that be?

Rog. I must beg your Pardon for that; I may be ruin'd for my Endeavours to serve you. . . . If you marry her, the Inconvenience

will be yours not mine. Besides . . . she'll never be persuaded to live in the Country. You must keep her in Town, with her Coach and six Horses, Pages, and Lacquies; and she must visit the Plays, the Park, and the Mulberry-garden.

C.-Gent. O Lamentable! this were the way to get a pair of Horns, bigger than the Stag's Head in my Hall has. But, if I were marry'd to her, I'd get her into the Country, as sure as a gun.

Rog. If you shou'd, you'd have every Week this Earl, that Lord, this Knight, and that Gentleman of her kindred come to take the fresh Air; and to hunt, and hawk with you, in the time of the Year.

C.-Gent. Why, they wou'd eat me out of House and Home, as the saying is.

Rog. They would despise your Beef and Mutton: You must keep a couple of French Cooks; and eat nothing but Pottages, Fricases, and Ragouts; your Champinions, Cox-combs, and Pallats; your Andoilles, your Langue de Porceau; your Bisks and your Olio's. . . . Then you must have your Quails, Ruffs, Gnats, Godwitt's, Plover, Dotrills, Wheat-Ear, Cock of the Wood, and a hundred sort of Fowls: Besides, they would scorn your Ale, and Cyder, and March-Beer; you must have your Cellar full of Champaign, Chablee, Burgundy, and Remedy Wines. But Mum, Sir, if you love me.

H, Page 341.

This scene from *Sganarelle, or the Forced Marriage* (Scene 6), is thus imitated by Ravenscroft in *Scaramouch a Philosopher.*

PANCRACE, SPITTZAFERRO.

Pancrace. Go, go friend, you are very impertinent, and ought to be banish'd the Republick of Letters.

Spittzaferro. Oh! here he comes to my purpose.

Panc. Yes, and not without very good reason: I say you are a Dunce, a Blockhead, an Ignorant; an Ignorantior, an Ignorantissimus, and Ignorantissimetissimus, an Ignoramus per omnes Cases, Moods and Tenses.

Spitt. He has been wrangling with somebody in a Disputation, Signior.

Panc. You will be arguing, and know not so much as the very Rudiments of Learning.

Spitt. Passion blinds him so, he sees me not, Signior.

Panc. 'Tis a Proposition condemn'd, confuted, rejected by all Philosophers both Ancient and Modern.

Spitt. Somebody has much incens'd him . . . I . . . .

Panc. Toto Coelo, Toto via aberras.

Spitt. I kiss your hands, Signior Pancrace.

Panc. Servant, Servant.

Spitt. Can I . . .

Panc. Do you know what you have done! A Syllogism in Bocardo.

Spitt. I desire——

Panc. The Major's absurd, the Minor's impertinent, and the Conclusion ridiculous.

Spitt. I desi . . .

Panc. I'd sooner dye than grant what you say, and I'l defend my opinion to the last drop of my Ink.

Spitt. Can I . . .

Panc. Yes, I'l defend this Proposition, *pugnis et calcibus, unguibus et rostro.*

Spitt. Signior Aristotle, pray what has so incens'd you?

Panc. I have all the reason in the World.

Spitt. Pray, what was't?

Panc. An illiterate Blockhead wou'd maintain an erroneous Proposition; a false, damnable, destructive, execrable Proposition.

Spitt. May I beg leave to know what 't was!

Panc. Ah! Signior Spittzaferro, nature is this day reverst, and the World is falling to a general decay, a most shameful Licence reigns every where, and the Magistrates who are establisht to take care of the Publick, ought to blush for shame, in suffering such a horrible and intolerable Scandal as this.

Spitt. What, pray?

Panc. Is it not a most horrible thing, a thing that cries to Heaven for vengeance, that it shou'd be suffer'd, for a man publickly to cry the form of a Hat?

Spitt. How's that?

Panc. I maintain that a man ought to say the figure of a Hat, and not the form; yet, not *forma*, but *figura;* for there is this difference betwixt form and figure, that the form is the external disposition of animate Bodies; the figure is the external disposition of Bodies inanimate: It ought to be said, the figure of a Hat and not the form. Go to, Dunce as thou art, this is the truth of the thing, these are the express terms of Aristotle, in his Chapter of Quality.

Spitt. Marry, I thought we had all been undone! Come, Signior Pancrace, think no more of this; I have a business to impart to you, I desire . . .

Panc. O, impertinent Blockhead!

Spitt. Pray, forget it. I desi . . .

Panc. Dunce.

Spitt. I beseech you, Sir, . . . I desi . . .

Panc. To defend against me such a Proposition as this.

Spitt. He was in the wrong . . . I . . .

Panc. A Proposition condemn'd by Aristotle.

Spitt. That's true . . . I . . .

Panc. In express terms. . . .

Spitt. Y' are in the right, yes . . . you are a Fool, a Dunce, an Ouff, a

Sot, a Blockhead, to dispute against a Learn'd Doctor that can both write and read.—So now the business is over, I desire you'd give me your attention ; I come to consult with you about a business which very much puzzles me. I have thoughts of Marrying, to have a Companion in the business of the World ; the person is handsome, and I like her very well : she thinks herself a happy Woman to have me for a Husband ; her Father and I are agreed : But I'm a little startled at a thing that you may guess . . . of a blow that a man never feels when 't is given him. And I desire you, as being a Philosopher, to tell me your opinion. How, what do you advise me to ?

Panc. Sooner than I wou'd accord to say the form of a Hat, I wou'd be brought to affirm that *datur vacuum in rerum natura*, and that I am not a Man, but a Vegetable, a Plant, or a four-footed Beast.

Spitt. Doubtless he 's possest ; Mr Doctor, pray hear me a little ; I have been speaking to you this half-hour, and you don't mind what I say.

Panc. I beg your pardon, I am so incens'd when I hear the truth oppugn'd.

Spitt. Well, Sir, forget it, and give me your attention.

Panc. Very good ; . . . what wou'd you with me, good Signior Spittzaferro ?

Spitt. I wou'd speak to you concerning a business.

Panc. In what Idiom ?

Spitt. Idiom !

Panc. In what Language would you discourse ; in French ?

Spitt. No.

Panc. Spanish ? *Spitt.* No.

Panc. Dutch ? *Spitt.* No.

Panc. English ? *Spitt.* No.

Panc. Latin ? *Spitt.* No.

Panc. Greek ? *Spitt.* No.

Panc. Hebrew ? *Spitt.* No.

Panc. Syriack ? *Spitt.* No.

Panc. Arabick ? *Spitt.* No.

Panc. Chaldea ? *Spitt.* No.

Panc. Turkish ? *Spitt.* No, no, no ; in Italian, in Italian.

Panc. Oh ! in Italian ?

Spitt. Yes.

Panc. Go then on t' other side, for this ear is destin'd only to Scientifical Languages ! and this for my Mother-tongue.

Spitt. What a deal of Ceremony there is with these Learn'd Men.

Panc. Well, now tell me what you wou'd have ?

Spitt. I wou'd have your opinion concerning a difficulty.

Panc. A Philosophical difficulty, without doubt.

Spitt. Excuse me . . . I . . .

Panc. Perhaps you wou'd know if Substance and Accident be terms synonimus, or equivocal in respect of being.

Spitt. Not at all, Signior.

Panc. If Logick be an Art or a Science?

Spitt. Not that neither! . . .

Panc. If it has for its objects the three operations of the understanding or only the third?

Spitt. No : . . I . . .

Panc. If there be ten Categories, or only one?

Spitt. Not I . . . I . . .

Panc. If the Conclusion be of the Essence of eight Syllogisms.

Spitt. No, no, . . . I . . .

Panc. If the essence of good consists in the Appetibility, that is in being desirable, or in being convenient?

Spitt. No, that I . . .

Panc. If good be reciprocal with the end?

Spitt. Peu! Ho! I . . .

Panc. If the end can move us by its real being, or by the intentional, that is, by the being it has in our apprehensions?

Spitt. No, no, no, a Pox o' the Devil; none of all this.

Panc. Explain your self then, for I can't guess what 't is.

Spitt. Aye, aye, Signior, I wou'd explain myself; but you must hear me then: the business that I wou'd discourse with you about, is this: that I have some thoughts of Marrying a gentlewoman, that is young and handsome, and one who has a kindness for me; and I have ask'd her Father's consent. But now I apprehend . . .

[*They speak together, and at the same time.*

Panc. Speech is given to man to explain his thoughts; and just as thoughts are the representations of things, so are our words the representations of our thoughts. But those representations are distinguish'd from others, in as much as other representations are altogether distinguish'd from their originals; and words include in themselves their originals, they being nothing else but the thoughts explicated by external signs; from whence it comes, that those who think well, do also speak well. Now therefore explain your thoughts to me by your words, which are, of all signs, the most intelligible.

Spitt. [*Pushes the Doctor into his house, and returns*] The Devil take all such folks as won't hear a man speak; I'l go find out the other Philosopher; he perhaps may be more reasonable, and less talkative.

Panc. [*Comes out again, and Spittzaferro pushes him in*] Now, Aristotle says there is this difference . . .

Spitt. Are you there again with your Aristotle? Go, your Master Aristotle 's a Fool, and you 're an Ass.

Mrs Carroll (Centlivre) has, in the fifth act of *Love's Contrivance*, also literally translated Molière's scenes between Sganarelle, Pancrace, and Marphurius; the only difference is that in her play it is the lover Bellmie who disguises himself twice as a philosopher and proffers advice.

I, Page 348.

The following scene from Shadwell's *Sullen Lovers* (Scene iv., end) is partly imitated from Molière's *Forced Marriage* (Scene vi.) Sir Positive At-all is the English Pancrace.

STANFORD, SIR POSITIVE AT-ALL, LOVEL, LADY VAINE, EMELIA, CAROLINA.

Sir Pos. No, no, Madam . . . I understand little; but I 'll tell you, Madam, what was said of me the other Day by some great Persons, that shall be nameless.

L. Vaine. What was that, Sir?

Sir Pos. That I was a Man of the most universal Knowledge of any Man in England; but, without Comparison, the best poet in Europe.

Car. Now, Lovel, to your Post.

Lov. Navigation.
Sir Pos. Navigation d' ye talk of?
Car. Geography.
Sir Pos. Geography d' ye talk of?
Lov. Astronomy.
Sir Pos. Astronomy d' ye talk of?
Car. Palmestry.
Lov. Physick.
Car. Divinity.
Lov. Surgery.
Car. Arithmetick.
Lov. Logick.
Car. Cookery.
Lov. Magick.

[*Lovel and Carolina speak so fast one after another, that Sir Positive turns himself first to one, then to another, and has not time to speak to them.*]

Sir Pos. Hold, hold, hold, hold! Navigation, Geography, Astronomy, Palmestry, Physick, Divinity, Surgery, Arithmetick, Logick, Cookery, and Magick: I'll speak to every one of these in their Order; if I don't understand 'em every one in Perfection, nay, if I don't Fence, Dance, Ride, Sing, fight a Duel, speak French, command an Army, play on the Violin, Bag-pipe, Organ, Harp, Hautboy, Sackbut, and double Curtal, speak Spanish, Italian, Greek, Hebrew, Dutch, Welsh and Irish, Dance a Jig, throw the Bar, Swear, Drink, Swagger, . . . Quarrel, Cuff, break Windows, manage Affairs of State, Hunt, Hawk, Shoot, Angle, play at Cat, Stool-ball, Scotch-hop and Trap-ball, Preach, Dispute, make speeches——[*Coughs*] Pr'ythee get me a glass of small-beer, Roger.

Stanf. Hell and Furies!
Em. Oh, oh—— [*They run.*

Sir Pos. Nay, hold, I have not told you half; if I don't do all these, and fifty times more, I am the greatest Owl, Pimp, Monkey, Jack-a-napes, Baboon, Rascal, Ouf, Ignoramus, Logger-head, Curr-dog, Block-head, Buffoon, Jack-pudding, Tony, or what you will; spit upon me, kick me, cuff me, lugg me by the Ears, pull me by the Nose, tread upon me, and despise me more, more than the World now values me.

[*Exeunt omnes, and he goes out talking as fast as he can.*

J, Page 351.

The eighth scene of Molière's *Forced Marriage* has been very well imitated in *An Hour before Marriage*, in the scene between Tardy, the lawyer, and Stanley.

Stanley. Stay one moment, good Mr Tardy.—I have a little affair to mention to you.

Tardy. With all my heart, Sir; mention it.

Stan. As you have drawn up these writings, Mr Tardy, you cannot but know how matters stand between the young lady of this house and me.

Tar. You mean the young lady whose mother rents these lodgings, namely, Miss Melville.

Stan. Certainly I do.—Who else should I mean?

Tar. Nay, I know not.—I can only give a sort of a guess as to what you hint at.

Stan. Indeed!—Well, I'll tell you then.—I have obtained the consent of her friends (which of course includes hers) and have given them my promise to marry her. So far all is in train.

Tar. It's very possible.

Stan. Very possible! I tell you it is as I say.

Tar. I know nothing to the contrary.

Stan. How should you, when the thing is a fact? Now, she is young, handsome, and very virtuously brought up, Mr Tardy.

Tar. It's not unlikely.

Stan. What do you mean by not unlikely? I say, she is young, handsome, and virtuously brought up: now this last circumstance made me think I should have a chance of living quietly and retired with her.

Tar. You might think so.

Stan. I *did* think so. But I have since found her to be giddy and extravagant; so I am convinced that, on the contrary, she would lead me into a good deal of expence.

Tar. It's not impossible but you may suppose so.

Stan. I tell you I am convinced of it. I am as certain of it as that I am standing here. I suppose I may be clear in that. You see me standing here, don't you?

Tar. I think so.

Stan. You only think so?

Tar. No more. Isn't every thing a matter of doubt? and in law hardly any thing is certain. Oh, the glorious uncertainty of the law! Such things I could tell you, such alibis made out, and such proofs overthrown! There was a case (you 'll find it in Strange's Reports, volume iii. folio 517), Wilkins against Sanderson; it was in the second of William and Mary—Wilkins.

Stan. We 'll hear it another time; at present, Mr Tardy—

Tar. Nay, I ask pardon.—I should not have quoted the case but in evidence of what I advanced.—That there was nothing in law which would not admit of being controverted. For instance, now—you are in possession of a very good estate in Oxfordshire.

Stanley. I am, and have been these twenty years.

Tar. Well, and you think, perhaps, that that estate 's your own?

Stan. Yes, I am pretty positive of it.

Tar. And now, I am not.—I don't know but that estate may belong to me.

Stan. To you, Mr Tardy.

Tar. Yes, to me. Were I to put you upon producing your titles, and proving your rights, there is a possibility that it might appear to belong to me.

Stan. The man's mad. Well, I'll not enter into any dispute with you. The matter I wish to have your opinion on is this. You know that in law and in strictness I am still at liberty to proceed further or not as I chuse.

Tar. Perhaps you may—perhaps you may not.

Stan. What the devil! I am not married yet—am I?

Tar. It's more than I know.

Stan. But I know, to my comfort, that I am not.

Tar. It may be as you say.

Stan. You 'd set one mad. Why you know it is. Are not those writings yet unsigned?

Tar. They may—they may not.—I admit nothing.

Stan. Bless me. Well, I'll say nothing. That I have still a choice, I know very well, so I don't ask you about that: but I would be glad to have your advice whether it would be prudent in me to marry or not.

Tar. Whether it would be prudent in you to marry or not?

Stan. Yes, that 's the question.

Tar. There 's much to be said on both sides.

Stan. That I know. But what is your opinion? Do you think it an advisable step, or do you not?

Tar. The event will probably make that appear.

Stan. What would you advise?

Tar. It is a matter of a very doubtful nature.

Stan. True. But what resolution would you have me take? I must determine myself one way or other.

Tar. I do think you must.

Stan. [*Eagerly*] Must do what?

Tar. Determine yourself one way or another.

Stan. I believe you are jesting. What is it you mean? I ask you whether you think I shall do right to marry this young lady?

Tar. That 's according as it happens.

Stan. Would I do better, think you, to break the thing off?

Tar. According as it happens.

Stan. For Heaven's sake give me a rational answer. I have a great inclination for the girl.

Tar. That may be.

Stan. But I 'm afraid, that if I married her, I might repent it afterwards.

Tar. The thing is not impossible.

Stan. In one word, what would you have me do?

Tar. Just what you please.

Stan. Now, what you do if you were in my place?

Tar. As it is not a point of law, nor such a thing as we can lay before counsel, I really don't know. And so, Sir, I am your very humble servant. [*Exit.*

Stan. A scoundrel! Not one word that 's positive to be got out of him! After spending one's breath for half an hour together, endeavouring to squeeze some sort of an opinion out of him, one is just as wise as at first.

K, Page 352.

The sixth, seventh, and eighth scenes from *The Forced Marriage* are freely rendered in *Love without Interest; or, The Man too hard for the Master* (Act iv., Scene 2). Pancrace is, in the English play, Wrangle; Marphurius, Sobersides; and Sganarelle, Fickle.

WRANGLE, FICKLE, SOBERSIDES.

Wrangle. Fool! Blockhead! Incomprehensible Dolt! Thou Ox in an Ass's Skin! . . . Get you gone to School again, and learn the meaning of the Word Ratification before you pretend to dispute the Legality of Essential Formality, requisite to the Constitution thereof; for I tell you once more, thou impertinent Head-piece, *Ignoratis terminis, Ignoratur et ars!*

Fickle. . . . Ay, ay, Sir, so he is an ignorant termagant Ass, to pretend to argue with you that can read, write, and Latin . .

Wran. Dilate energetically, concisely and uninægmatically.

Fick. . . . Sir, I did not understand——

Wran. Oh ye pellucid Stars! whose Influences are subservient to Sapience, deconglomerate me from these unzodiacal, uncerebrated, circumambient Gemini. . . . Sir, I tell you both Sence or no Sence, Ratification is an Overt Subsequent Act to a Precedent Covert Transaction.

Fick. Overt! Covert! Precedent! and Subsequent! What trade do these Terms of Art belong to? What a Devil, do you banter? Or are you a conjuring?

Wran. I'll be plain: For Example, I owe you a Grudge; that is a Covert, or Secret Transaction in my Mind.

Fick. Good.

Wran. Then [*Kicks and cuffs him*] this is an Open, Publick, or Overt Act or Declaration thereof.——Now I hope you understand this is demonstrative. . . . But I lose time 'mongst a Brace of Owls.

Fick. Owls! Owls! Owls in your throat, Sir; . . . if hard Words, dry Blows and Affronts, be all the Counsel I must expect, [*Exit*] my Riddle-me-ree, [*Exit*]. [*Turning him out.*]

Wran. Then I will leave you, as I found you, obfuscated by Poetick Dulness and Palpable Calliginosity.

Fick. Bur-r-r, Buz-z-z, *Gingiber et Lacer Cicer Pepper atque Papaver* [*Turns him out*] Owls! Owls! I don't know but I may be as good a Scholar as himself. I begin to——

Wran. [*Re-enters*] And Cimerian Tenebrosity.

Fick. Hey! here again with his Tenebrosity? Hey, Noun, [*Runs to him*] Pronoun, Preposition, Conjunction, Participle, Interjection; *Haec aquila*, an Owl, both he and she. [*Like an Owl runs at him*] Or-ro-o-o-o-o-o——[*Looking after him*] Huzza! Victoria! So 't is but a little Resolution, and these Roarers are soon tam'd. [*Spying Sobersides*] O, Sir, cry your Mercy. This same passionate Puppy has so what-ye-call 't my Intellectuals, I protest, overlook'd you.

Sobersides. [*Gravely*] That might be, Sir.

Fick. [*Mocking*] So it might, I vow, Sir. Now I shall be as much plagu'd with this Fellows formal Preciseness, as I was with the tother's blustering Bombast.——Deliver me but from this Piece of stiffn'd Tiffany, and if ever I go to Counsel to a Citizen again, may he take my Nose and Ears for his Fee. [*To Sobersides*] But, Sir.

Sober. [*Formally*] Sir.

Fick. Why, Sir, what I intended to have discours'd this same tasty, old, positive Puppy about, was Matrimony; I'm going to be married to a brisk, young Country Virgin, her Fortune, it's true, is but small, but my Inclinations are great; you know me, let me know your Opinion.

Sober. That I believe I shall give you; but first, by way of Advice, reprehend not that Positiveness in another, whereof you seem to be so well provided; for you seem positively to affirm that you are going to be married, which, if you consider the Mutability of sublunary things, I esteem that you might with more Modesty say, that you conceive, or think, judge, or suppose yourself upon the Matrimonial Point.

Fick. The Man's in the right on 't there; for we're farthest off sometimes, when we think our selves nearest to the Blank. . . .

Sober. Not unlikely.—Then, Sir, as for her Briskness, it may possibly be Levity; her Youth artificial, and her Vertue and her Virginity as slender as her Fortune.

Fick. [*Angrily*] How, Sir! No Vertue! No Virginity!

Sober. Possibly none; for I am of the Sects of the Scepticks, I think, I affirm nothing.

Fick. But I am not, and do possibly say that Man's a Villain that

dare call her Honour in question; therefore, Sir Dubious, pick up your Awls, or, now my Hand 's in, I can promise you no better Entertainment than your Deconglomerating Predecessor; th' Example's fresh, my Passion rises; therefore once more walk off, or I shall Overtly ratifie upon your Morrion.

Sober. Fortune I contemn, Examples I defie, and will maintain my Opinion, Spight of Passion or Ratification.

Fick. Nay, if you begin to be positive, walk, walk, my Philosopher. [*As he turns him out.*]

Sober. I 'll have Satisfaction for this Affront done to my Person and Opinion; I 'll be revenged, look to it. [*Fickle thrusts him out.*]

L, Page 357.

The eighth scene of Molière's *Forced Marriage*, which represents the interview between Marphurius and Sganarelle is literally imitated in Ravenscroft's *Scaramouch, a Philosopher* (Act iv., Scene 3), in a dialogue between Scaramouch, the Pyrrhonian philosopher, and Spittzaferro. The meeting between Sganarelle and the gypsies is also followed in the English comedy, but whilst in Molière (Scene 16), the brother Alcidas, challenges Sganarelle, because he refuses to marry Dorimène, in the English play, it is not the brother, but Octavio, the lover of Aurelia (Dorimène) who is the bearer of the challenge. The scene (Act v., Scene 4), is a little different, and as follows:—

OCTAVIO, SPITTZAFERRO.

Octavio. Come Signior, chuse your sword, I pray.

Spittzaferro. I kiss your hands Signior, I have ne'er a throat to cut: What a Civility's there?

Oct. It must be so if you please

Spit. Signior, no matter for Complements among Friends, Servitore [*Is going off, Octavio pulls him back.*

Oct. Signior; if you please you must not depart yet; come take which you like best, I'm a little in haste, or I'd allow you more time to make your choice.

Spit. I have nothing to say to the business.

Oct. You are not pleas'd then to fight him.

Spit. No, not at all.

Oct. You don't think good to kill one another?

Spit. Signior, no.

Oct. 'Tis against your inclination.

Spit. Signior, I—

Oct. You have made a resolution to the contrar

Spit. And please you.

Oct. At least Signior Spittzaferro you'l have no reason to complain; you see I observe method, and do things in order; you go from your word, the party injur'd sends you a challenge, I bring it, you refuse to fight, I beat you for not accepting the message, that follows of consequence, all this is in course, and I know you are too worthy a person not to approve of proceedings which are so orderly and exact.

Spit. What a sort of man's this?

Oct. Come Signior, chuse your weapon without more ado.

Spit. Yet agen!

Oct. Signior, I force no body, but you must take it; nor does Signior Alberto compel you to any thing, but you must fight him, if you please.

Spit. I shall do neither.

Oct. No?

Spit. Signior, no.

Oct. With your permission then. [*Beats him.*

Spit. Ah, ah, ah, ah.

Oct. Signior, I have all the reluctancy imaginable to treat you so contrary to all my inclinations; but with your good liking, if you please, I can't forbear till you do me the favour to grant what I request of you.

Spit. I kiss your hands Signior, give me which you please.

[*Takes a sword.*

Oct. No Signior, which you please. So is it not best to do things thus freely and courteously. I'm very glad to find you so inclinable, for you are a very civil person, and one for whom I have a particular respect; I was extreme sorry to see you wou'd force me against my Nature. Well Signior, I'll go and acquaint Signior Alberto, that you will please to do him the obligation to meet him at six to morrow morning upon the Mole, with your sword in your hand, like a gallant person. So Signior Spittzaferro I kiss your hands; Your most humble Servant. [*Exit.*

Spit. Eh! What a sort of Ceremony, what kind of Complements are these? What an obliging, disobliging person was this? Euh, *Malledetto.*

M, Page 359.

The scenes between Alcantor, Alcidas, and Sganarelle (Scenes 14, 15, and 16), in Molière's *Forced Marriage* are thus rendered in *An Hour before Marriage* (Act ii. Scene 1); Sganarelle is there called Stanley, and Alcantor and Alcidas, in one person, Sir Andrew Melville. But in the French play Sganarelle is cudgelled into marriage, in the English play he is only threatened to fight a duel.

Sir Andrew. Mr Stanley, your most obedient —— I am much pleas'd at finding you here —— It is the mark of impatience that is flattering to my sister.

Stanley. [*Aside*] Unfortunate ! — Sir Andrew — I — I —

Sir A. Indeed to do the girl justice, your impatience to conclude matters is but natural — She is a young lady of——

Stan. Of infinite merit, most certainly — But, my dear Sir ——

Sir A. I guess what you would say — You would tell me that the lawyer has put the finishing hand to the writings — I know it — I see them there.

Stan. I beg your pardon, Sir, it's another thing.

Sir A. Say no more, I am beforehand with you there too. You want, since everything is in readiness, to have a nearer day fix'd for the ceremony.

Stan. [*Aside*] Very cruel this — Dear Sir, if you will indulge me but while I speak two or three words ——

Sir A. Twenty ! twenty.

Stan. Lady Melville, your mother, and yourself, Sir Andrew, have both done me great honour in accepting of my proposals for your sister.

Sir A. Pass that, Mr Stanley ; your happiness, you said, depended upon it, and we wou'd not cross you — You have your hearts content now, and I give you much joy of it.

Stan. You know, Sir, I — am not a — very young man, and — I fear Miss Melville may — not think that circumstance — altogether a — pleasing one ;

Sir A. Pardon me, Sir, from the first your age was no objection — It is written to be sure in very legible characters in your face ; but for that very reason, as it never was any secret to my sister, so it can be no source of complaint now.

Stan. I have a peevishness — an — an oddity in my temper, that I fear would be — insupportable to a wife. It might — create an aversion in her, which ——

Sir A. Not at all. She has too much complaisance, and too strict notions of propriety to ——

Stan. Then, Sir, my health — I find it but so, so. I am greatly apprehensive, her affection may cool when she sees her time taken up in nurse-tending a sickly man.

Sir A. Oh, her sense of duty will turn all such pain into pleasure.

Stan. Will nothing, nothing do ? [*Aside*] Well, Sir, shall I speak sincerely to you ? I would not have you bestow your sister on me.

Sir A. Do you jest, Sir ?—You don't know Sir Andrew Melville, Sir, when once my word is past, I had rather die than not stand to it.

Stan. But my dear Sir, I waive it—I waive it freely—I release you from all obligation of that sort.

Sir A. Sir, I am bound by my honour—my sacred honour. Her mother has consented to your offer, I have pass'd my word also ; and here I confirm my promise that you shall marry my sister, in spite of any who may claim pretensions to her hand—Were there a score of suitors, and each one of the number a duke, still you should have her—Give me

your hand, Mr Stanley—I am a man of my word, I say you shall have her.

Stan. This man sticks like bird-lime [*Aside*]—Sir, I am sorry you force me to it; but since I cannot make you understand me otherwise I must tell you in so many words that I have chang'd my mind, and am now determined not to marry.

Sir A. You have chang'd your mind, and are now determined not to marry?

Stan. Just so—Something has happen'd, which puts it out of my power to alter my condition at present. I hope you are not offended Sir, at this change in my sentiments?

Sir A. Offended!—by no means, Sir—you are perfectly free to act as you please; I should be loth to put the least constraint on you. [*Exit.*

Stan. Hum!—very reasonable indeed! an exceeding mild, civil, considerate gentleman—I protest I did not think I should get so easily out of this dilemma—I am a fortunate man—what an escape have I had!—Well, now I have got out of this danger, if ever I think again of wedlock, may the ceremony be my requiem, and the marriage-bed my grave. [*Re-enter Sir Andrew Melville*] Eh! what's the meaning of this? return'd! He has not chang'd his mind, I hope—I must speak him as fair as I can—Sir Andrew, I assure you I am most sincerely sorry to have been under a necessity of declining the very high honour I had proposed to myself.

Sir A. Oh, sir, there's no harm, no harm in the world.

Stan. It gives me vast concern, upon my honour.

Sir A. You need make no apology, sir;—you have a right to act just as you please.

Stan. I am happy to find, sir, that you see the thing in so rational a light——and I wish you a very good morning, sir. [*Offering to go.*

Sir A. One moment, good sir—Will you give yourself the trouble to chuse one of these two swords. [*Offering two swords to Stanley.*

Stan. I to chuse one of those two swords?

Sir A. Yes, sir—Pray be so kind as to see which you like best—Take whichever you please, sir.

Stan. [*Retreating towards the door*] Sir, I—I—don't understand what you mean——I—I wish you a good morning. [*Offers to go.*

Sir A. [*Keeping between Stanley and the door*] Sir, I beg ten thousand pardons, I see you are going to the door to bolt it that we mayn't be broken in upon—I'll save you the trouble, sir. [*Bolts and stands before the door*] Now, sir—— [*Offers Stanley the swords.*

Stan. Sir, what is it you mean?

Sir A. My dear sir, no more than this—It is your pleasure to refuse my sister's hand, after you have asked it, and its having been promis'd to you.—Now, upon the strength of that refusal, sir, I must beg of you to do me the favour to permit me to have the felicity of cutting a throat with you.

Stan. Sir, I—I—desire no such felicity—I—have no throat to cut.

Sir A. There are people, sir, who would make a noise about such a matter as this, and affront you—But it's not in my way;—I love peace and quietness.

Stan. Peace and quietness!—

Sir A. I do, sir, you see it—I beg you will give yourself the trouble to chuse whichever hits your fancy most.

Stan. I don't fancy either—I desire to be excused.

Sir A. Come, come, Mr Stanley—Do what you ought to do; don't suffer yourself to be press'd any longer. Act as becomes a man of honour—Come, chuse—please yourself. [*Offering the swords.*

Stan. I have no inclination to please myself in that way, sir.

Sir A. Excuse me, sir—It's possible I may understand you. Perhaps you have alter'd your mind, and mean to accept the honour of my sister's hand.

Stan. You mistake, sir, I do not—I—I—wish you a good morning. [*Endeavouring to get round to the door.*

Sir A. Oh, I ask your pardon—You chuse this method of deciding the matter—Here, then, sir— [*Offers Stanley the swords again.*

Stan. Hold, sir!—hold!—I do resolve;—I do resolve—I'll marry the lady, sir—I'll marry the lady.

Sir A. I am extremely happy to find, sir, that at length you consider the matter in so rational a light—I love peace and quietness; and besides, I protest to you, Mr Stanley, I have so much esteem for you, that it would have given me great pain to have been under the necessity of killing you.

Stan. Sir—you—you are vastly kind;—and—I—am very much obliged to you.

Sir A. Oh fye, sir,—no obligation at all—Well then, I'll step in to my mother and sister, and let them know that you are come to put the finishing hand to this affair.

N, Page 359.

In *The Irish Widow* (Act ii., Scene 1) Garrick imitates the sixteenth scene of Molière's *Forced Marriage*, but it is Widow Brady herself in disguise who fights old Whittle, whilst in the French play it is Dorimène's brother Alcidas who compels Sganarelle to marry.

WHITTLE; *Enter* WIDOW *as Lieutenant O'Neale, seemingly flutter'd, and putting up his sword,* THOMAS *following.*

Wid. Where is your master?

Tho. There, Captain, I hope he has not offended you.

Wid. If you are impertinent, sir, you will offend me. Leave the room.

Tho. I value my life too much not to do that——What a raw-bon'd tartar! I wish he had not been caught and sent here.

[*Aside to his master, and Exit.*

Whit. Her brother, by all that's terrible! and as like her as two tygers! I sweat at the sight of him. I'm sorry Thomas is gone—He has been quarrelling already.

Wid. Is your name Whittol?

Whit. My name is Whittle, not Whittol.

Wid. We shan't stand for trifles--and you were born and christen'd by the name of Thomas?

Whit. So they told me, sir.

Wid. Then they told no lies, faith; so far, so good. [*Takes out a letter*] Do you know that hand-writing?

Whit. As well as I know this good friend of mine, who helps me upon such occasions. [*Showing his right hand and smiling.*

Wid. You had better not show your teeth, sir, 'till we come to the jokes—the hand-writing is yours?

Whit. Yes, sir, it is mine. [*Sighs.*

Wid. Death and powder! What do you sigh for? are you asham'd or sorry for your handy-works?

Whit. Partly one, partly t' other.

Wid. Will you be plas'd, sir, to read it aloud, that you may know it again when you hare it.

Whit. [*Takes his letter and reads*] *Madam*—— [*Reads.*

Wid. Would you be plas'd to let us know what Madam you mean? for women of quality, and women of no quality, and women of all qualities, are so mixt together, that you don't know one from t' other, and are all called *Madams*. You should always read the subscription before you open the letter.

Whit. I beg your pardon, sir. I don't like this ceremony. [*Aside*] To Mrs *Brady* in Pall-Mall.

Wid. Now prosade——Fire and powder, but I would——

Whit. Sir, what 's the matter?

Wid. Nothing at all, sir; pray go on.

Whit. [*Reads*] *Madam—as I prefer your happiness to the indulgence of my own passions—*

Wid. I will not prefer *your* happiness to the indulgence of *my* passions——Mr Whittol, rade on.

Whit. I must confess that I am unworthy of your charms and virtues—

Wid. Very unworthy indeed. Rade on, sir.

Whit. I have for some days had a severe struggle between my justice and my passion——

Wid. I have had no struggle at all: My justice and passion are agreed.

Whit. The former has prevail'd: and I beg leave to resign you, with all your accomplishments, to some more deserving, though not more admiring servant, than your most miserable and devoted THOMAS WHITTLE.

Wid. And miserable and devoted you shall be——To the postscrip rade on.

Whit. Postscript: Let me have your pity, but not your anger.

Wid. In answer to this love epistle, you pitiful fellow, my sister presents you with her tinderest wishes; and assures you, that you have, as you desire, her pity, and she generally throws her contempt, too, into the bargain.

Whit. I'm infinitely oblig'd to her.

Wid. I must beg lave, in the name of all our family, to present the same to you.

Whit. I am ditto to all the family.

Wid. But as a brache of promise to any of our family was never suffer'd without a brache into somebody's body, I have fix'd upon myself to be your operator; and I believe that you will find that I have as fine a hand at this work, and will give you as little pain, as any in the three kingdoms. [*Sits down and loosens her knee-bands.*

Whit. For Heaven's sake, captain, what are you about?

Wid. I always loosen my garters for the advantage of lunging: it is for your sake as well as my own; for I will be twice through your body before you shall feel me once.

Whit. What a bloody fellow it is! I wish Thomas would come in.

Wid. Come, sir, prepare yourself; you are not the first by half a score that I have run through and through the heart, before they knew what was the matter with them.

Whit. But, captain, suppose I will marry your sister.

Wid. I have not the laste objection, if you recover of your wounds. Callogon O'Connor lives very happy with my great aunt, Mrs Deborah O'Neale, in the county of Galloway; except a small asthma he got by my running him through the lungs at the Currough: He would have forsaken her, if I had not stopp'd his perfidy, by a famous family stiptic I have here. Oho! my little old boy, but you shall get it. [*Draws.*

Whit. What shall I do?—Well, sir, if I must, I must: I'll meet you to-morrow morning in Hyde-Park, let the consequence be what it will.

Wid. For fear you might forget that favour, I must beg to be indulged with a little pushing now. I have set my heart upon it; and two birds in hand is worth one in the bushes, Mr Whittol—Come, sir.

Whit. But I have not settled my matters.

Wid. O we'll settle 'em in a trice, I warrant you.

[*Puts herself in a position.*

Whit. But I don't understand the sword; I had rather fight with pistols.

Wid. I am very happy it is in my power to oblige you. There, sir, take your choice; I will plase you if I can. [*Offers pistols.*

Whit. Out of the pan into the fire! there's no putting him off: If I had chosen poison, I dare swear he had arsenic in his pocket. Look 'ee, young gentleman, I am an old man, and you'll get no credit by killing

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on 18 July, 2018